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HI-TECH FOR ALL?

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POWER & *RELIGION*
IN AMERICA TODAY

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Correspondence

Vacation poverty

Toledo, Ohio

To the Editors: Pat Ryan Greene's terse report on what poverty in Latin America really looks like ["My Summer Vacation," Oct. 8] was profoundly moving.

What I most applaud about the article is that Mrs. Greene doesn't lay a guilt trip on the reader. It is trite to say that an experience such as she describes kindles indignation, not illumination.

Many justly indignant people, in a sort of perverse anthropomorphism, must personify the palpable evil they witness: governments, here and there, are responsible; the church is responsible; multinational corporations are responsible.

That the conditions Mrs. Greene reports simply should not be—should, on any number of counts, be alleviated, as soon as possible—goes without saying.

It is far less clear that changing personnel, in state, church, or business, will bring this about, even if many of these individuals seem to have inured themselves to the spectacle that shook Mrs. Greene's world. Incompetent? yes; calloused? yes; culpable? that's not so clear.

A nineteenth-century English historian enunciated a fundamental rule of political wisdom when he ascribed the success of English government (*not* British, please note) to "a felicitous combination of liberal aspiration and conservative instinct."

ROBERT KIRTLAND

Creationism in class

Arlington Heights, Ill.

To the Editors: Creationists [Oct. 22] have a legitimate point of view, but it should not be taught in natural science classes; rather, it belongs in history, literature, religion and *philosophy* of science classes. This is because creationists use scientific data to buttress the theological and philosophical propositions that God is objectively real and that he created man and the universe.

Creationists are admirable and well-intentioned; they seek to demonstrate that there is meaning and purpose in the universe and that there is something sacred about man and the world in which we live. The difficulty with creationism is that science, because of its own limitations and restrictions, simply cannot deal with the questions of God and creation. When natural scientists either affirm or negate the objective reality of God and creation, they step outside their field of expertise and enter different though no less intellectually respectable and legitimate branches of knowledge; namely, theology and the *philosophy* of science.

Scientists as scientists are concerned solely with descriptive reality; they deal with observable and empirically verifiable phenomena; they use the techniques of the laboratory to seek truth and knowledge of external reality. We simply cannot and must not provide theological and philosophical answers to scientific questions, even as we cannot and must not supply scientific answers to theological or philosophical questions.

Perhaps our public schools will incorporate into their natural science classes an intense two-week study and discussion of the *philosophy* of science so that creationism may be legitimately examined.

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW

The real Newman

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editors: Father Edward E. Kelly's worthy aim—the canonization of a dimensional Newman—cannot justify his careless juxtaposing of "a feminine dimension in Newman's personality" and that "his basic sexual orientation was homosexual" [Sept. 10]. Stereotyping certain sensitivities as "feminine" and confusing them with the prevailing image of a limp-wristed homosexuality obfuscates our slippery grasp on the reality of constitutive homosexuality, and disserves the promise of the feminine—in both men and women—for gentling this violent planet back from the abyss. Ironically, the feminine is anathema in current homosexual circles: gay macho reigns.

Above all, this hit-and-run treatment of two important components of Newman's genius—the homosexual and the feminine—despite Kelly's obvious good intention to avoid the excesses of "Some Newman admirers (who) are painfully disturbed by such considerations," doesn't augur well for publicly arriving at a whole Newman. . . .

JERRY BRENNAN-BECK

Twenty years later

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I was one of those present with Father Imbelli in St. Peter's Square on October 11, 1962 as the Second Vatican Council opened (I was also there a year later at that audience with Pope Paul VI whose symbolic ironies he nicely evokes) ["Vatican II: Twenty Years Later," Oct. 8].

I will always regard my presence in Rome for the first two sessions of the Council as one of the great privileges of my life. The experience has its uses now as, in a graduate course on Vatican II, I try to help students appreciate what the Council was and did: I can tell them what it was like to be following the summaries of each day's session and to find oneself caught up in the genuine drama—present at the creation, so to speak. The personal experience is especially helpful now that I encounter, each time I teach the course, more and more students who cannot remember what the church was like before the Council and whose first reading of the Council documents often evokes the

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commonweal

A MILESTONE FOR THE BISHOPS

IT IS NO SECRET that this journal has not always been happy with the positions on public affairs taken by American bishops. Back in the 1930s, *Commonweal* dissented from the nearly unanimous tendency of the bishops to see the hand of God in Generalissimo Franco's anti-Communist crusade in civil war-torn Spain. In the 1950s, we dissented from the not-quite-so-unanimous approval of Joe McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade in cold-war America. Not so many years ago, while agreeing with the bishops on the immorality of abortion and the necessity of reversing the effects of a disastrous Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*, we raised serious questions about the way the bishops had chosen to pursue their position politically. As an independent lay journal, *Commonweal* has been highly aware of the varieties of opinion among the Catholic population and of the complexities of translating moral teachings into specific public policies.

It is no automatic piety, then, that makes us greet with so much admiration the achievement of the bishops in formulating and debating a pastoral letter on war and peace in a nuclear age. Nor is it the fact that the bishops have arrived at some position we already considered our own. Certainly, *Commonweal* has long been critical of specific arms proposals issuing from the Pentagon, and of U.S. failures in the pursuit of arms control. But on many of the core issues of the morality of deterrence, we have been as troubled as many of the bishops are, more perplexed, it seems, than many of our pacifist friends at *The Catholic Worker* or *Sojourners* or even at the *National Catholic Reporter*. We have followed the bishops' deliberations — and tried to contribute to them — not simply in hopes that they might endorse "our" opinion but in a spirit of genuine searching. We have not been disappointed.

With two drafts of the pastoral letter down, and one to go, the overwhelming majority of the bishops, meeting in Washington, have indicated their basic agreement with the work so far. And with good reason. The bishops have proceeded thoughtfully, openly, responsibly.

To begin with, their very process is a milestone in American Catholic history. The drafting committee listened to a wide range of "witnesses," representing different kinds of expertise and different points of view. Indeed, the committee itself was consciously shaped to assure that opposing viewpoints would be considered. The first draft, a remarkable document in itself, was reworked to assimilate, when called for, the reams of comments that it received. Again, at the bishops' November meeting, full debate was encouraged. The five opening commentators — Bishop Hunthausen, Archbishop Quinn, Cardinal Krol, Cardinal Cooke, and Archbishop Hannan — were selected so that a range of criticism could be put on the floor. The bishops had two sessions in which to pursue discussion in small groups. The final open debate further allowed a wide variety of criticism to be voiced forcefully.

The openness of this process is reflected in the draft of the pastoral letter itself.

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"This pastoral letter is more an invitation to continue the new appraisal of war and peace than a final synthesis," the bishops write. And later: "To say 'no' to nuclear war is both a necessary and a complex task. . . . We see with clarity the political folly of a system which threatens mutual suicide. . . . We see with much less clarity how we translate a 'no' to nuclear war into the personal and public choices which can move us in a new direction." The bishops, it is safe to say, have been far more humble in the face of their task than a good many of their critics.

This openness and humility have been rewarded. In the course of going through two drafts, the pastoral letter has probably been better publicized and more carefully scrutinized than any previous such document. The bishops have quite rightly connected their concern with nuclear warfare to their earlier concern with abortion, but some feminists attending the November meeting also quite rightly contrasted the different procedures the bishops used in dealing with the two topics. We are learning, Archbishop John Roach, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in his closing press conference; and there was some reason to believe that, among other things, he had the exceptional impact of this latest statement, as contrasted with earlier ones, in mind.

Despite the draft's frank avowal that pondering the full complexities of nuclear arms and deterrence has been "a sobering and perplexing experience," it cannot be concluded that the bishops have refused to take a firm stand. The fireworks surrounding their deliberations should be evidence of that. They reaffirm the Council's condemnation of direct attacks on civilian populations and accordingly announce a clear rejection of counter-population warfare. While acknowledging division among moralists on the question, the bishops "as a matter of practical moral guidance" also oppose "a policy of attacking [military] targets which lie so close to concentration of population that destruction of the target would devastate the nearby population centers. . . . No Christian can rightfully carry out orders or policies deliberately aimed at killing noncombatants." Furthermore, the bishops conclude, "it is an unacceptable moral risk to initiate nuclear war in any form," a position directly challenging the current NATO policy of "first-use-if-necessary."

The problems such conclusions pose for the doctrine of deterrence are obvious. At its worst, of course, deterrence can simply be a rhetorical cloak for one or other of the nuclear powers actually to seek a position of preponderance in world affairs. At its best, however, deterrence aims at preventing this immoral and catastrophic use of nuclear weapons precisely by posing the *possibility* of such (immoral and catastrophic) use if the adversary were to do so first. Can one nation prepare to commit a massively immoral act in the very hope of forestalling the commission of such an act by any other nation? Can one unqualifiedly condemn such preparation with the knowledge that the condemnation, if taken seriously, might actually increase the likelihood of such an act being committed?

The bishops have not yet answered these questions to their own satisfaction, as Archbishop Bernardin candidly pointed out in reporting on the committee's work. And there is good reason to think they may not be able to resolve the difficulties in the months of redrafting ahead. Ambiguity, said Archbishop Roach a bit ambiguously at his closing press conference, may be more inherent to the process of moral teaching than it has been presumed. Some like Bishop Hunthausen have, of course, urged a condemnation of nuclear arms that would include all forms of deterrence. Their pacifist position is argued in a fashion that challenges a prevailing Catholic concern with consequences and rests on a view of God's providence that, in our view, this century's "signs of the times" do not support. On the other hand, many bishops would like to see deterrence justified as simple "possession" of nuclear weapons, which could have their deterring effect even though the U.S. was resolved never to use them immorally — no adversary, after all, could really be certain how this nation would react under the actual conditions of nuclear attack or threat. Unfortunately, "possession" is not quite a fair description of the real conditions of hair-trigger readiness that now characterize our nuclear armament, and would necessarily characterize it if deterrence were to succeed.

The bishops have been helped, for the moment, in dealing with this problem by two distinct personages — John Paul II and Ronald Reagan. The pope has helped them by stating, in his address to the UN Special Session on Disarmament last June, that deterrence is "morally acceptable" — "not as an end in itself but as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament." Apart from substituting "acceptable" for "tolerable," this formulation is not really different from that of Cardinal Krol in his 1979 testimony in support of SALT; and it leaves open the question of criteria for deciding whether progress toward nuclear disarmament is genuinely under way. Relying on a papal statement is a secure way to obtain consensus among the bishops, but it is only a stopgap. The pope has not yet supported his statement with a full-blown theological explanation — which is what the bishops are trying to provide. Whether they explicate his declaration or develop their own argument will amount to the same thing, if they are not to stand fast with a simple appeal to authority.

Ronald Reagan, on the other hand, has helped the bishops by serving up such a menu of new weapons proposals as to make it clear that even their "lack of unequivocal condemnation of deterrence"—to quote the draft—is nonetheless a real moral challenge to the current direction of U.S. policy. Thus the bishops repeatedly condemn the slide toward nuclear "war fighting," either in weaponry, strategy, defense preparations, or official rhetoric. They oppose weapons like the MX that "give credence to the concept that the U.S. seeks a first strike." They demand the severest scrutiny of all new weapons systems for their possible destabilizing impact. They support a nuclear freeze and a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. They warn against the use of deterrence as grounds for a dangerous arms buildup. The White House, in the "counter-pastoral" written by William Clark, argued that its arms reduction proposals qualified the administration's defense policies for episcopal approval. The bishops politely replied that they would

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listen to the administration's argument. But they also indicated that they had heard it before; and the fact that, having heard it, they failed to mention it more than hints at some disbelief about the government's priorities on arms control.

What will happen between now and the May meeting when a final vote is anticipated? The bishops can expect many more attacks on their "competence" to deal with the nuclear question, some of them coming from individuals whose own claims to competence appear to rest on little more than the fact that they are *not* bishops. They can expect more pressure from the administration, perhaps even exerted through Rome. As well as weighing the many thoughtful criticisms raised at the November meeting, the drafting committee will have to give further thought to the implications of their no-first-use position for the defense of Western Europe, as Europen governments and hierarchies are already letting them know.

Beyond all that, the drafters must improve upon the ragged performance some of the bishops have given in the media, learning to distinguish between individual views and the positions of their common document. Inevitably, the press will simplify and stereotype their thinking, as pacifist, as naive, or, condescendingly, as "idealistic." It would be tragic if a false image of their work were irreparably fixed in the public mind before a third draft can even emerge.

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

GLACIAL CONFRONTATION

IS MOSCOW FINALLY CLEARING THE DECKS?

(Editors' note: This column was originally sent to the printer two days before Brezhnev's death was announced. Since it largely deals with the overall condition of relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, we have decided to publish it as written.)

ONE DAY last September, Moscow's telephone lines to the outside world went on the blink for several hours. Russian officials said the problem was equipment failure. Technical experts at AT&T in New York said this sounded plausible to them. But an air of mystery attached to the failure all the same. For one thing, Moscow was in the process of junking international direct-dialing equipment which had been installed only two years earlier. Apparently the KGB didn't like the ease with which Soviet dissidents could talk to supporters outside the country. In addition, Western reporters in Moscow remembered that a complete halt in normal telephone service preceded the imposition of martial law in Poland a year ago. In Moscow, strange noises sometimes mean more than all the official commentary in *Pravda*. Some reporters wondered if the Moscow telephone "breakdown" in September didn't indicate a succession crisis, a kind of battening down of the hatches while the Politburo decided who should replace Leonid Brezhnev.

Not long ago Soviet diplomats told State Department officials that a meeting between Brezhnev and Reagan would be impossible. The Soviet premier is suffering from heart and lung troubles and can only work two hours a day, they said. Brezhnev's health has been the subject of international rumor for years. His appearance at public events — the color of his skin, the tone of his voice, his need for a helping hand to rise from a chair or descend from a lectern — has long suggested a man in physical decline, but now the end appears to be near. At seventy-five, Brezhnev apparently has only one job left: to dismantle the last remnants of his policy of détente.

Khrushchev sometimes confessed to Western diplomats and journalists that the greatest weakness of the Soviet Union was its lack of a settled method of deciding who rules. The Politburo may share power to a degree unknown in Stalin's day, but someone has still got to be the final boss. When Soviet leaders change a kind of political scuffle takes place to settle who has got the most supporters, or the least enemies. In Khrushchev's case the scuffle actually involved drawn guns in the Kremlin and the execution of the chief of the KGB, Lavrenti Beria. The uncertainty was so great that the American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, allowed himself to hope that the entire Soviet state might disintegrate. Presumably, the Reagan administration harbors no such illusions this time.

But something large is going on in Moscow — a kind of sea change reflecting the long, steady decline in relations dating from passage of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in 1974, which linked trade relations to Jewish emigration. Russia does not abandon its course easily. Perhaps Brezhnev convinced his colleagues that Reagan the president would be different from Reagan the candidate. This was a vain hope. Reagan opened his administration with some extraordinary verbal abuse of the Soviet Union. He firmly rejected the second SALT treaty which had taken years to negotiate; accused the Soviets of driving for outright superiority in strategic arms; blamed them for *all* the trouble spots in the world; introduced new arms talks with a one-sided American position which many experts think is unnegotiable; talked loosely of "prevailing" in a nuclear war; asked for the biggest peacetime increase in the military budget in American history, and attempted to halt a Soviet natural gas pipeline to Western Europe which had been planned for years.

This list might be much extended. Especially in the Defense Department, plans have been going forward at every level which are redolent with hostility. Talk of using nuclear weapons to hunt out Soviet leaders in their underground

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shelters is insulting, as if Russian leaders — but not Americans — could be counted on to think first of their own hides. Washington is often guilty of this kind of offhand, impertinent, even arrogant generalization about Soviet character. We talk about Russian officials as third-rate party hacks only interested in the perks of power. American strategic planners assume the Russians value their own skins first, then their party's power, next military strength, and last the welfare of ordinary citizens. Soviet leaders are irritated by this—as who wouldn't be?—and often speak of American "impudence." But of greater substance at the moment is the U.S. proposal to spend some $18 billion on the communications and intelligence infrastructure needed to fight a prolonged nuclear war. No government can ignore spending on that level. Small wonder, then, that a Soviet diplomat in Washington recently said relations with the U.S. were at their lowest point in fifteen years.

Of course the administration has its case, too. The slide began long before Reagan took office. The Soviets have supported the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. They have sponsored Cuban military adventures in Ethiopia and Angola. They have pushed forward with aggressive arms programs to build large numbers of ICBMs with a threatening combination of accuracy and powerful warheads. They have alarmed, angered and frightened much of the world with the nakedest sort of oppression at home and in Poland. And above all, of course, they have brutally violated the one preeminent rule of the postwar world by invading and attempting to subjugate a sovereign neighbor—Afghanistan. These things can all be explained, but none can be justified. We might say that the 1960s were our years of arrogance, and the 1970s Russia's.

The one aspect of this long process which stands out—to my mind, at least—is its fatal, glacial quality. It is hard to say just when it began, or why; even harder to suggest what might have halted or deflected it. But one thing is clear. Détente is dead and buried. Where

National affairs

CASHING IN THE CHIPS

WANTED: A SOBER LOOK AT HIGH TECH

FOR POLITICIANS all over the Western world facing hard economic times, the words "high tech" have become a kind of magical incantation. If your heavy industry is going bust, the promise of microchips, computers, and robotics seems especially alluring. No wonder that almost every governor in the country wants to make *his* state the center of the high-tech industry. It all sounds clean, modern, productive: *Star Wars* technology will permit the Western industrial empire to strike back.

And in many ways, the new technology *is* exciting. The idea of using robots instead of people for repetitive work holds within it the promise of liberation. Word processors have given writers and printers enormous new flexibility. (I wrote a thesis on a word processor and it sure beats typing and retyping sixteen drafts.) The amount of information that can be carried on tiny little chips is staggering.

But on the political left, the new technology breeds a good deal of skepticism and fear. At the most basic level, much of the new technology promises what will quite literally be a major shift in power from labor to capital: human beings will be replaced by machines. Fewer and fewer people will be able to produce more and more. Many people will be put out of work.

Then there is the question of how the new machines affect people. Shoshanah Zuyboff in *Dissent* and David Moberg in the independent socialist weekly newspaper *In These Times* recently reported on the ways in which the new technology was fostering not liberation but alienation. Zuboff, for example, cited the case of a printer who moved from "a big printing contraption" to a video display terminal. According to the printer, the difference between "hot and cold type" is that cold type "has no blood and doesn't really need people at all." Moberg noted that users of video display terminals suffered from eyestrain, back pains, headaches, and stress.

What to make of the new technology? For all but the most sophisticated among us, it has an element of that old blues line, "Something's going on, but I don't know what it is." The potential reach of high tech is such that it is hard to imagine what it will make our homes and workplaces look like in fifty or a hundred years. Fiber-optics and laser technology could make the invention of the telephone seem rather pedestrian.

Given the potential of high tech (and my description is nothing compared to the breathless panegyrics of its ardent advocates), much of the criticism of it by unions and assorted lefties seems like the carping of Luddites. And it is important to recognize that there are Luddite elements on the left. Some mistrust the new technology simply because it seems to be growing fastest in capitalist societies. Others want to shore up old-fashioned heavy industry because that's one of the few places outside of government where trade unions are still strong. And there has always been a romantic element of leftist thought that sees industrialism, technology, and capitalism as of a single piece, creating alienated and unhappy human beings. ("Commodity fetishism" has always struck me as an odd phrase. I've never been able to understand why it is wrong for a worker to want a new car or an electric dishwasher. But there have been people on the left who have argued that the desire for consumer goods is some form of alienation.)

Still, the critics of the new technology are also asking

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the Russians are concerned, the Reagan administration is cold, hard, and ungiving. Now, at last, the Russians appear to be responding in kind.

Over the last few months Russian policy towards internal dissidents and domestic opposition in Poland has been hardening. It strikes an American as bizarre and neurotic that Moscow should feel threatened by the tiny handful of independent voices in the Soviet Union—the Jews who want to emigrate, the writers who want to publish, the evangelical Protestants who want freedom of conscience, the scientists who want to belong to the great world, the advocates of human rights and disarmament. Even in the early 1970s the dissident movement was pitifully small. It was all they could do to publish a magazine in typescript. Now *The Chronicle of Current Events* is long gone, the dissidents lucky enough to be famous have all been forced into foreign exile, and most of the others are dead, in prison, in psychiatric hospitals, or so beaten down and depressed they have simply given up. It took the KGB nearly a decade, but they have managed to impose the silence of despair on just about every citizen in a nation of three-hundred million.

Hard as it is to believe, the police are now redoubling their efforts against the last few score of holdouts. In October they threatened Dr. Aleksandr Lerner with prison if he did not stop contacting foreigners. He has agreed. The stream of visitors to his apartment has halted. The Helsinki Group set up in Moscow in 1976 to support human rights in the Soviet Union has disbanded. Sixteen of its members are in prison or exiled from Moscow. The last three gave up when one of them — a seventy-five-year-old lawyer — was threatened with arrest. At the end of October the physicist Andrei Sakharov, in exile in the city of Gorky, was attacked by KGB agents and robbed of a briefcase filled with personal diaries, letters, and a nine-hundred-page manuscript of his memoirs. There is a lot of evidence that such acts are the result of decisions at the very highest level of gov-

some very good questions; it would be well if these questions became a part of our political debate before we go off and give "high tech" a blanket endorsement, without knowing what it is, or means. For example, it would be far better to have robots doing boring jobs, but what do we do with all the people the robots will replace? Another way to put it is: how do we fairly distribute the fruits of the enormous gains that the new technology will bring? The unions would also do well to face up to the challenge of the technological transformations that are afoot. We don't want to write off our car and steel industries; but they'll never be the same again. If America becomes competitive again in these industries, part of the process will inevitably involve replacing people with machines. If the unions are to survive, they will have to conquer the new industries. And computers are changing the nature of work in ways that many employees find exceedingly unpleasant. In her thoughtful *Dissent* article, Zuboff notes that it is the very purpose of the "intellectual technology at the core of a computer system" to replace the individual judgments of human beings with "algorithms and decision rules." For those who actually write the decision rules, the work might be quite interesting. Those who merely use the machines, however, often find that they take a lot of the joy out of labor.

These are but a few of the questions that should become part of the political and economic debate over the next decade. Unfortunately, many of those who now talk the most about the high technology industry — especially in politics — prefer to think of it simply as a panacea. But those who seek a humane economy and humane workplaces must avoid making the opposite mistake by trying to halt technological progress in its tracks. Not only can this not be done; it should not be.

France's president, François Mitterrand, offered some thoughtful words on high tech in his recently published book, *The Wheat and the Chaff* (Seaver Books, $16.95, 284 pp.). On the one hand, Mitterrand sees the dangers of the technological leap we are taking. With the new technology, he writes, "inequality will be increased between those who cannot manipulate the data-processing tool, and between those who control its development and those who must submit to it." Moreover, he notes that "increased automation will lead to the elimination of innumerable jobs, chiefly in the white-collar category: post office, secretarial, and office workers. Nothing in the official proposals [he was referring to those of his predecessors in government] prepares for these transformations."

"However," he goes on, "we must remember that data processing, which arouses the same mistrust and the same ambitions as printing, railways, the telegraph, and the automobile did in the past, can just as readily constitute — in a socialist society — the decisive instrument of liberation. There will be fewer repetitive tasks, more direct responsibility, greater productivity, and a new upsurge of expansion. Providing, naturally, that a coherent political and cultural program is able to embrace this technological revolution, to define its uses, master its development. Data processing, biology, nuclear physics: The great fields of knowledge are open to conquistadors setting out in the name of democracy."

Those are good words from an eloquent politician. In democratic countries — whether they call themselves capitalist or socialist — the new technology has already altered our language and, amidst the jargon, left us with some memorable terms. The challenge is to program words like liberty, equality, democracy into the souls of those new machines; how to master them without stifling their development.

E. J. DIONNE, JR.

(E.J. Dionne, Jr., writes regularly on politics for Commonweal.)

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ernment, a fact which is bound to trouble an outsider. What can be the state of mind of the rulers of a great nation solemnly deliberating whether to accuse an elderly woman lawyer of slander, or to send out the goons to steal the memoirs of a grey-haired scientist? It is incomprehensible. But it also suggests the seriousness with which the Soviets are "clearing the decks," in the words of one Western diplomat.

Finally, Brezhnev addressed an unusual gathering of five-hundred Soviet generals in the Kremlin on October 27 and told them the "adventurism, rudeness, and undisguised egoism" of the United States would be met firmly. He accused Washington of "threatening to push the world into the flames of a nuclear war" by "trying to attain military superiority." He committed the Soviet Union to match the American buildup, to reach an understanding with China, to grow more grain and solve other economic problems, and finally to "wield weapons in a masterly way, to be able to use in full their combat possibilities" — which I take to be a message to Caspar Weinberger that if he wants to prepare to fight a nuclear war, the Soviet Union will match him warhead for warhead. Perhaps most important of all was Brezhnev's opening remark that the speech — the first clear response to the Reagan administration's hardened attitude, after months of a puzzling silence — had been the idea of the Soviet Defense Minister, Dmitri Ustinov.

Brezhnev's speech is no joke. The Soviet Union is extraordinarily tenacious in foreign affairs. When it once adopts a policy it will stick to it year after year, decade after decade. Brezhnev has been in power since 1964, when Ronald Reagan was getting ready to vote for Barry Goldwater. The Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, and the Soviet ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin, have been around just as long. Détente was Brezhnev's policy when Henry Kissinger was still teaching at Harvard, and the fact that Brezhnev has now, finally, at last given up on it is a change which will not easily be reversed. It marks the beginning of a bitter new worldwide struggle and another big spiral upward in the arms race.

But Americans tend to think it's never too late. Reagan will be out in '84, or at the very latest in '88, and we can repair the damage then. A show of "sincerity" by the new president, a "gesture" toward peace will get things back on the track. Time, however, has a way of running out. One of these days something large is going to happen in the world — a major political change in the balance of power. China will patch things up with Russia, or West Germany will drop out of NATO, or Poland and Czechoslovakia will threaten to break away simultaneously, or a born-again Marxist-Leninist true believer will come to power in Moscow. We like to think all the big things are going to remain just as they are, but it isn't so. It is in the scary moments that we really need détente. But it does not look like we are going to get it again soon. Weinberger's response to Brezhnev's speech was to say it proved the Russians were going all-out to win the arms race and we'd better look to our defenses. Robert McNamara once called this the "action-reaction phenomenon." It is an old law and it is still at work.

THOMAS POWERS

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

LET LITURGY BE LITURGY

STOP TRYING TO PUT A NEW SPIN ON IT

MY DAUGHTER came home from the Catholic high school she attends with a complaint about a Mass they'd had. "The priest sounded like a bad Shakespearean actor," she said. I know the priest, and she was right on target. Her comment led me to think about what I don't like, and occasionally downright hate, about liturgy. What follows is not a Lefebvrist plea for a return to the good old days. I don't believe there were any good old days, ever. The church started out bad, and the letters of Paul and James make it clear that liturgical abuses got in on the ground floor. What I do not find in many liturgies is something I have found just often enough to miss it. That is a sense of mystery, and the knowledge that in gathering to celebrate the Eucharist we are doing something important, something which calls out to everything in us.

It has been too easy for some defenders of what most of us have to put up with, liturgically, to dismiss the idea of mystery as either obscurantist or a false memory, so it is important to say what I mean. By mystery I do not mean that we are in the presence of mystery when we are in the presence of something unintelligible. Half of the language of adolescents is unintelligible, but none of it is mysterious. And it is not the shift from Latin to the vernacular which caused the problem. I have been to Eastern Orthodox liturgies in English which communicated more of mystery than Latin ever did.

What I mean by mystery is the consciousness, not so much of "unfathomable depths," but of a fathoming which doesn't end no matter how deep we go. In the sense that we know there is no limit to what we encounter, the Eucharist is unfathomably deep—but not because anything is closed to us. Instead, we encounter here, with limited vision, something unlimited. This can't happen if there is no perceptible difference between the sort of time we spend on the street and the sort we spend during the liturgy. (The term "spending time" is itself interesting; we do spend time when we regard it as something paid out. But a time passed attentively, with absolute alertness, is not exactly spent — it is appreciated, perceived, more than street time is. Spending time isn't far from killing time.)

Arguments have been made that all time is sacred, and that an attempt to make certain times sacred through ritual

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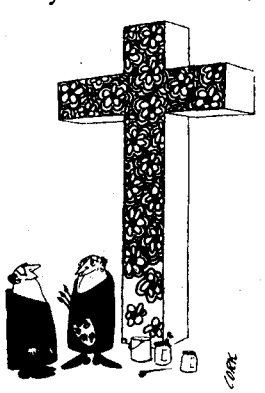
can blind us to the holiness of the ordinary. But like the argument that "my work is my prayer," this is a half-truth. Of course all time, coming as it does from God, is sacred. The holiness of time isn't in doubt. The problem is that our perceptions are ordinarily too cluttered to allow us an awareness of the holiness of time, and we need the deliberateness of liturgy, the way it has of altering and slowing time down, to remind us. In the moment before the Orthodox canon begins, the choir sings, "Let us, who mystically represent the cherubim, now set aside all earthly care." The prayers at the foot of the altar, with the sense of moving from one sort of time to another, also accomplished this — or anyway gave an opportunity for its accomplishment. Unless we make this effort consciously we are not likely to develop any deep consciousness of the sacredness of time, just as work cannot really be prayer unless a specific time for prayer is taken apart from our ordinary busy-ness.

This sense of moving from street time to sacred time — a movement which can ultimately result in our appreciation of the sacredness of street time — doesn't happen when a priest comes out, says "Good morning," gets a ragged "good morning" in return, and then says quickly "To celebrate this liturgy let's prepare ourselves by calling to mind our need for God" and, pausing just long enough to make silence awkward and not long enough to allow any real space for prayer, he rattles into the next prayer. People start business meetings with this sort of haphazard rapidity, but it is a lousy way to begin a liturgy.

The old Latin liturgy was often sloppy, and I don't miss it. Nor do I miss Gregorian, which I love; the truth is that outside some miserable attempts by parish choirs — and not many of them — the only place I have ever heard it was on records. Pre-Vatican II Catholic music was, in our parish anyway, as bad as the current stuff. I hate "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" and "Let There Be Peace On Earth" — the first sounds like Howdy Doody Indian music and the second like a skating rink ditty — but "Immaculate Mary Our Hearts Are on Fire" was also pretty bad, musically; being famous didn't help it.

The solution is not a return to the old liturgy but rather an appreciation of the fact that we are called by our faith to transformation, something which liturgy ought to assist us in. That means not an affirmation of time, emotion, and language as we ordinarily perceive it, but help in seeing those common elements of our lives in depth, and this demands a radical shift of perspective. When liturgy makes us feel profoundly self-conscious we are moving in the wrong direction. In *Letters to Malcolm* C.S. Lewis wrote that people who object to novelty in liturgy are not being hidebound at all: "They don't go to church to be entertained. They go to use the service or, if you prefer, to *enact* it. Every service is a structure of acts and words through which we receive a sacrament, or repent, or supplicate, or adore. And it enables us to do these things best — if you like, it works best — when, through long familiarity, we don't have to think about it. As long as you notice, and have to count, the steps, you are not yet dancing but only learning to dance. A good shoe is a shoe you don't notice. Good reading becomes possible when you need not consciously think about eyes, or light, or spelling. The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.

"But every novelty prevents this. It fixes our attention on the service itself; and thinking about worship is a different thing from worshipping. . . . A still worse thing may happen. Novelty may fix our attention not on the service but on the celebrant. You know what I mean. Try as one may to exclude it, the question 'What on earth is he up to now?' will intrude. It lays one's devotion to waste."



Unless they are sensitive to what liturgy ought to be about, even the nicest priests can fall into the trap of thinking that their job is to put some new spin into the liturgy, giving it some extra pizzaz. One priest I know, a thoroughly decent man, was given for awhile to beginning his liturgy with "The Lord be with you" (as well he might), and when the people replied "And also with you," he said "Thank you" — as if the people replied that way to do him a favor or compliment him; so I once replied to his reply, "You're welcome," greatly annoying my children; but I really did want to see how long we could keep this little colloquy going. In some ways this assumption that liturgy has to be made new every time isn't just bad liturgy but a profound misunderstanding of liturgy's purpose. Liturgy must lead beyond itself; when the celebrant in any way calls attention to himself or his personality he leads us smack into the surface of liturgy and we can't get beyond it.

Which leads to what my daughter said: the priest who read the words of the liturgy like a bad Shakespearean actor is a man who feels that the words of the Mass can't live without his beefing them up with special emphases and dramatic gestures. The old liturgy at least made it clear that the action being done was being done for the people by someone who, defective as he might be, represented the people as a whole. He wasn't there to charm them. His personality didn't matter one damn bit. There are feelings which lie buried deep beneath our superficial emotions, and in the same way there are aspects of our person which are obscured by attention to personality. Liturgy ought to address those deeper levels.

But on esthetic grounds alone there are good reasons not to regard the liturgy as a kind of play which needs to be beefed up by its actors. Most high school drama embarrasses us; there aren't that many accomplished actors around. Priests who think they must act the liturgy had better be sure they are very good. If they are very good at acting they will still have missed the point about liturgy, but at least they won't be so embarrassing to the rest of us.

JOHN GARVEY

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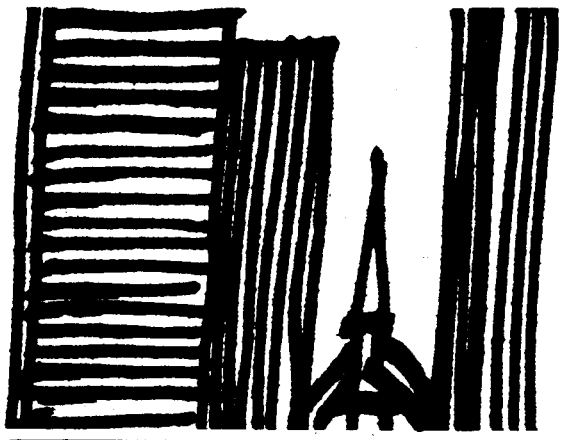

Religion & power in America today

ROBERT N. BELLAH

I WOULD LIKE to suggest that there has been a profound change in the meaning of both religion and power in modern times, that our ideas and images of religion and power are derived largely from pre-modern traditions that are less and less effective today, and that only if we discern the realities that surround us can we begin to see how what is still valid in our religious tradition can speak to current structures of power.

To characterize pre-modern Western society very schematically, we can say that it was centered on religious institutions and political institutions between which there was indeed some tension but also some balance and complementarity. Both shared an organic ethical conception of life common to pre-modern societies generally, but derived in the West from biblical religion and classical philosophy. Both society and soul were conceived of hierarchically, as composed of higher and lower energies. Power in the service of higher energies was conceived of as legitimate, as just authority. Power in the service of lower energies was conceived of as illegitimate, as oppressive, or in religious terms as demonic.

Political and religious roles and character types reflected these conceptions of organic ethical order. There were the ideas of the just king, the statesman, the good citizen, the saint, the priest, the pious layman. There were also conceptions of corrupt and unjust rulers, rebellious citizens; heretical religious teachers, and unfaithful laymen. In modern times all of these conceptions have been subject to ideological critique, have been seen as mere masks for exploitative power; and traditional evaluations have often been reversed. Yet this traditional organic ethic still gives us such ideas as we have of what is noble and what is base, what is virtuous and what is wicked, what is admirable and what deserves reproof. It also still gives us images of the statesman and the citizen, the saint and the faithful laity, that do not quite fit our situation but which we do not seem able to abandon.

Modern society replaces the older ideal of organic hierarchy with a new idea of functional differentiation of spheres of life. In this new society the central institution is no longer religion or even the political order but the economy. But because the economy lacks a *telos* of the sort that religion and politics had (the end of religion is salvation, of politics the common good), the economy does not replace them as a new kind of dominant hierarchical institution. Rather it radically undermines all older conceptions of ethical hierarchy and replaces them with functional or even technical utility instead. In so doing modern society produces a new worldview, one that reverses the traditional conception of higher and lower energies. The modern ideology is radically egalitarian and individualistic and hopes to create a good society through unleashing and manipulating egoistic and selfish desires. The new social philosophy, in the form of classical liberalism, replaces the older conception of ethical, political, practical reason, even in the political sphere. Even as early as Hobbes the problem of political leadership was replaced by the problem of regulation, of the management of human beings conceived as the material to be subjected to technical manipulation.

All of these changes were not without their precursors and accompaniments in the religious sphere, as we know from Max Weber. Yet as we also know from Weber, the increasing dominance of functional rationalization changes the place of religion as it was known in all previous societies. Religion is to be displaced from its role as guardian of the public worldview that gives human life its coherence (a role that it retained in early Protestant communities as well as in Catholic ones). Religion is now relegated to the purely private sphere where it is to be considered merely one of a variety of possible private options.

Accompanying the subjectivization or privatization of reli-

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gion, already well under way in the eighteenth century, is the tendency to depoliticize religion. In traditional societies religion was deeply involved with the public order. It was as inconceivable that politics would operate without religion as that religion could survive outside the political order. But now religion no longer had a public role, because religion was no longer seen as the bearer of a public truth. Religion along with all sorts of superstition and metaphysics could exist as fantasies in individual minds, but the public world was to know only instrumental reason in the service of human progress and this-worldly perfection.

The great changes I have been describing took place very much in the name of liberation. "Freedom" was the great slogan. The older hierarchical structures of church and state were seen as obscurantist and oppressive, as often they were. The new society was to be based on individual freedom and reason. The power exercised by self-proclaimed legitimate kings, fathers, and priests was cast under suspicion. In its place was to come as much as possible mere technical management that would leave the greatest possible sphere to individual enterprise and freedom. That, in the name of technical management, systems of manipulative power over the individual grew to a degree unknown in pre-modern society is only one of the many ironies of modernization.

ALL of these tendencies went further and faster in America than anywhere else. Philip Rieff has described in fascinating detail how first the older Western character ideals of religious man and political man, both oriented to the public world and the common good, were replaced by the character ideal of economic man, devoted to the pursuit of private self-interest; and then how the ideal of economic man modulated gradually into the ideal of psychological man, interested not only in the acquisition of wealth but also in the acquisition of experiences. Psychological man pushes the logic of economic man one stage further. There is now no longer any inner compulsion toward productivity, though productivity is still valued as a means to other, more personal, ends. What the individual learns from the therapist, according to Rieff, is "to develop the full power and liberty of his emotions without paying the price of fixing them too firmly on any object or idea."

Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* shows us how the character ideals of economic and psychological man fuse in the new pattern which he labels "bureaucratic individualism," the logical consequence of that process of instrumental rationalization that Max Weber analyzed so profoundly. Bureaucratic individualism revolves around two character types which give it concreteness and specificity: the manager and the therapist. Both differ sharply from the older character models of political leader or priest—the latter assume that there are common shared ends and that it is the role of the leader or priest to educate the community in the understanding and pursuit of those good ends. Modern man, economic and psychological alike, does not want to hear about common ends or the Good as such. There is no Good but only private and individual goods. Neither the manager nor the therapist claim to know anything about ends good in themselves. They exercise their power, and they do exercise power, only insofar as they represent the technical constraints of external reality and can provide direction to cope with those constraints. Thus the manager exercises power not through some vision of a shared life together, but because he claims to know the right decisions to make in the face of scarce resources, the laws of the market, and perhaps the number of missiles the Russians have. He claims only to provide the resources and protections which will allow individuals in their "private" lives to pursue their multifarious private ends. Similarly the therapist disavows any knowledge about the good for man. He supplies only the technical assistance for the patient, more recently the client, to discover and pursue his own ends. The manager organizes work; the therapist organizes emotions. But it is an open question whether the result is total liberation or Max Weber's iron cage. In this connection it is worth pondering the fact that the Soviet bloc seems to be converging on the same pattern of manager/therapist control. Of course it is more bureaucratic and less individualist than in the West, but if Hungary is any indication of the shape of things to come, the convergence with the Western model may be growing.

Alexis de Tocqueville observed these tendencies incipient in American society a hundred-and-fifty years ago. He described what he saw with the term "individualism," only then recently coined. "Individualism," he wrote, "is a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look out after itself."

In such a society "Each man is forever thrown back on himself alone, and there is danger that he may be shut up in the solitude of his own heart." This new individualism would be, Tocqueville wrote, remarkably congenial to a new form of despotism, which, unlike traditional tyrannies, "does not break men's will, but softens, bends, and guides it, so that it hinders, restrains, enervates, stifles, and stultifies" by keeping the pursuits of individuals purely private ones. This new form of despotism could be accommodated "more easily than is generally supposed, with some of the external forms of freedom," so that it has "a possibility of getting itself established even under the shadow of the sovereignty of the people."

But Tocqueville also observed that older patterns, political and religious, patterns of citizenship and churchmanship, still survived in America and held in check the most destructive potential of our new individualism. The older political ideal of republican statesmanship and citizenship not only survived in some kind of uneasy tension with the newer ideas of liberal individualism, but in certain instances actually flourished. The founding generation was quite extraordinary; Lincoln was one of the few real statesmen that any country produced in the nineteenth century; and even in the twentieth century a Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a teaching president who could educate our citizenry to the common good. And our churches

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refused to be entirely privatized and depoliticized. They contributed to all our great movements of social amelioration: the opposition to slavery, the Social Gospel movement and the efforts to make Catholic social teachings effective, and more recently the civil rights movement and the opposition to the Vietnam war. Today the churches are deeply involved in the effort to halt the drift to nuclear annihilation.

AND YET CERTAIN recent tendencies suggest that the pattern of bureaucratic individualism is growing more powerful and less restrained by the social effectiveness of older civic and religious ideals.

I am thinking, to begin with, of the growth of what is called, incorrectly I believe, conservatism in our politics over the last decade, culminating in the stunning political victory of Ronald Reagan and his allies in 1980, but also of certain deep-going changes in the moral beliefs and practices of our great middle class. Reaganism seems to me a form not of conservatism, in any traditional meaning of the term, but of classic liberalism—unrestrained free-market capitalism and radical individualism. Explicitly it appeals to economic man, even in the older form that requires some degree of repressive self-discipline, but its tacit appeal is to psychological man; and this accounts for much of its electoral success.

Let us consider some of the recent changes in our society that weaken still further the older civic and religious ideals and strengthen the ever growing dominance of bureaucratic individualism. One of the things that has happened in the last twenty years is a shift in American elites, in part a change in the ruling groups within corporate capitalism, in part a change in the political elites associated with them. In the media this change is expressed too superficially but not entirely erroneously as a shift from the Frost Belt to the Sun Belt. Certainly the power of American industry has shifted from the old heavy industries concentrated in the Northeast and upper Midwest to the newer more technologically innovative industries of the South and West.

Another way to express the shift is to speak of the decline of the old Eastern establishment and its replacement by the Sunbelt capitalists—sometimes called cowboy capitalists — of Texas and California. Again this is too simple but contains a germ of truth. The Eastern establishment, at least in some of its members, still had a remnant of older civic and religious conceptions of American life. Its most representative figures came from families with long-standing traditions of public service; were educated in long-established universities, largely in the Northeast, with traditions of respect for the humanities; and had religious commitments to congregations or denominations that had a historic sense of social responsibility. Their Sunbelt successors often lacked all of these traits: they came from upwardly mobile middle-class backgrounds, were educated in technical universities, and when they were religious tended toward a private pietism with no public implications at all. They and the politicians they supported were, in a word, managers. We got to know the mentality in the Nixon years, and we are getting even better acquainted with it today. The manager, as we have said, is not a leader. He adjusts and manipulates in terms of what he takes to be the realities of the situation. If he fails he is abruptly fired and somebody new is hired in his stead. We have seen how this tendency common in corporate life has spilled over into political life and left us without vision or direction.

Even more distressing is the fact that this change in leadership is reflected in a change of ethos in a large portion of the middle class. What is significant here is not the Moral Majority, of whom my liberal colleagues are so frightened, but something that comes closer to being amoral and is in fact a majority. This new middle class believes in the gospel of success 1980 style. It is an ethic of how to get ahead in the corporate bureaucratic world while maximizing one's private goodies. In the world of the zero-sum society it is important to get to the well first before it dries up, to look out for number one, to take responsibility for your own life and keep it, while continuing to play the corporate game. That will probably also require a bit of therapy.

To some extent this new middle class replaces an older middle class, just as the new elite replaces an older one. Partly this new middle class differs from the older one in the same regional pattern involved in the shift in elites. Population as well as power has been moving from the Northeast to the Southwest. But partly the shift is generational. The younger generations of the old middle class that provided the center of American culture, the strength of civic commitment, and the support of the old mainline churches, look rather different from their elders. It is in these younger generations that the triumph of psychological man is most evident.

I AM PRESENTLY directing a research project on American values in which my research team is interviewing well-educated, middle-class Americans in several parts of the country, many of them managers and therapists or the clients of therapists. The theme that we find dominant again and again in our interviews is the freedom, autonomy, and fulfillment of the individual. One young woman therapist in Atlanta sums up what we heard from many: "In the end you're really alone," she said, "and you really have to answer to yourself. You're responsible for yourself and no one else."

This attitude, so clearly descended from Tocqueville's individualism with its danger of being shut up in the solitude of one's own heart, undermines, at least potentially, every human commitment. If I am responsible for myself alone and for no one else then my feelings, wishes, and desires are the only ultimate criterion, standard, or norm for my action. If any other person or group or institution "doesn't meet my needs"; if "I don't feel good about them"; or "I don't feel comfortable with them" (phrases we hear all the time in our interviews), then there is no reason I shouldn't leave—or if *they* should feel that way, there is no claim I have on them. Thus marriage, friendship, job, community, church are all dispensable—if these don't meet my needs I can always find others who will, or if I don't it is no one's fault but my own.

I have suggested that there are some deeply disintegrative

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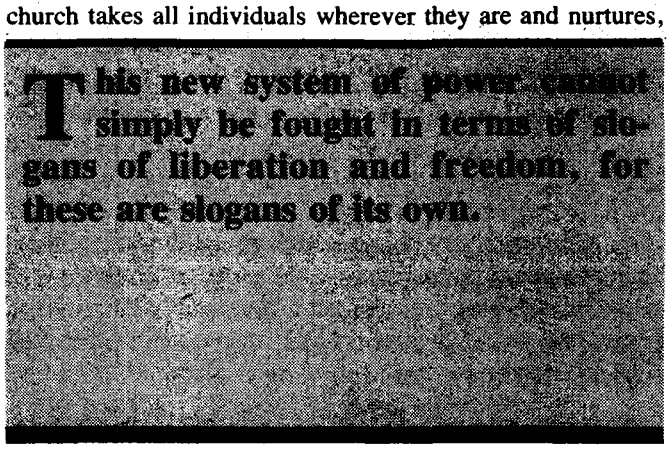
tendencies in this ever more dominant pattern of American individualism. But I want to emphasize that what I have called, following MacIntyre, bureaucratic individualism is not only disintegrative—it is also a system of power. Its power to manipulate depends in part on its power to individualize, promote freedom of private choice, and heighten individual subjectivity. Its power operates under the banner of liberation and freedom of the individual. Thus our conceptions of power based on more traditional systems of hierarchical domination do not apply well. (These traditional conceptions, of course, apply in much of the less developed world and to pockets of deprivation in our own society.) This new system of power—we need Michael Foucault, as well as Weber, to help us understand it—cannot simply be fought in terms of slogans of liberation and freedom, for these are slogans of its own, even if we would doubt that it has a deep understanding of spiritual or even civic freedom. Perhaps to oppose effectively the power of bureaucratic individualism we need to reappropriate under contemporary conditions older religious and ethical models of human existence.

IN PART religion in America has contributed to the triumph of bureaucratic individualism, and in part it has provided a framework to restrain it. With the help of Ernst Troeltsch's three great types of Christian religious institutionalization, we can analyze how this has occurred.

The three types are, of course, church, sect, and mysticism. "Mysticism" is perhaps a bit problematic as the term for the third type, but it becomes clearer when we remember that Troeltsch sometimes used the phrase "religious individualism" as synonomous with it. The church type we may briefly characterize as an organic conception of the religious institution for which the defining metaphor is the Pauline image of the body of Christ. The church is seen as the living presence of Christ on earth; as, in Karl Rahner's term, itself the fundamental sacrament from which all the sacraments are derived. The church has a certain temporal and even ontological priority over the individual. It is in and through the church that the individual believer comes to be what he or she is. There is a certain givenness, a certain reality, in the church which allows the individual to count on it, to take it for granted in a positive sense. Through the sacraments and the word the church takes all individuals wherever they are and nurtures, educates, and supports them in whatever degree of Christian life they are capable of attaining. The church is inevitably in one sense hierarchical, even elitist, for some are recognized as more learned or more spiritually advanced than others. The church puts forth role models—saints, those in religious orders, priests, teachers—from whom others have much to learn. All are one in Christ, but the organic metaphor allows a hierarchical differentiation of function. Along with this organic model goes a partial willingness to accept the world as it is, to compromise with the world in the service of Christian pedagogy, to stay close to power in hopes of Christianizing it to some degree. The church tends to be comprehensive and flexible with respect to society and culture, accepting and attempting to transform social forms and also art, science, and philosophy. The characteristic form of distortion of the church (each of the types has its particular form of distortion) is a temptation to authoritarianism, even coercion, on the one hand, and too easy compromise with the powers of this world or even cooptation by them, on the other. But when the church sets itself against worldly powers it can mobilize tremendous resources of resistance.


This new system of power cannot simply be fought in terms of slogans of liberation and freedom, for these are slogans of its own.

The church type has been present in America from the beginning of European settlement, but it has never been dominant in pure form. Early New England Puritanism embodied much of the church type but with a strong admixture of the spirit of the sect. More purely sectarian forms of Protestantism emerged in the seventeenth century and particularly in the eighteenth century and strongly colored all of American culture ever since. The Roman Catholic church, even after massive immigration made it a significant force in America, remained a minority church. As it absorbed ever more of American culture it too was affected by sect ideals, a tendency that has grown stronger since Vatican II. Indeed in America the church type has grown harder and harder to understand. Our individualism—what we might call our ontological individualism, because it is more than a value, it is a fundamental way of grasping reality—cannot even comprehend the social ontology of the church. Nonetheless, the church is still among us and may prove to be one of our most valuable resources.

THE SECT TYPE has been present in America virtually from the beginning; includes the Protestant denominations with the largest numbers; and has been in many ways the dominant mode of American Christianity. The sect views the church primarily as a voluntary association of believers. The individual believer has a certain priority over the church in that the experience of grace has been seen as temporarily prior to admission to membership, even though, once admitted, collective discipline in the sect can be quite strong. The sectarian church sees itself primarily as the gathered elect and focuses on the purity of those within as opposed to the sinfulness of those without. Whereas, as Octavio Paz has pointed out in writing about the U.S. and Mexico, the church type, with its ideal of communion, includes everybody at some level or other in its hierarchical organic structure, the sect with its ideal of purity draws a sharp line between the essentially equal saints and

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reprobates without. The strong sectarian emphasis on voluntarism and the equality of believers—the sect is anti-elitist and insists on the priesthood of all believers—is congenial to democratic forms of organization and congregational autonomy. There is a tendency for grace to be overshadowed by "the law of Christ" and for the sacraments to be less central than a moralism that verges on legalism. As Troeltsch pointed out, the sectarian group is often, especially in its beginnings, found primarily among lower income groups and the less educated. It is tempted toward a radical withdrawal from the environing society and a rejection of secular art, culture, and science. "The sect," Troeltsch said, "which belongs essentially to the lower classes, and which therefore does not need to come to terms with thought in general, goes back to the pre-church and pre-scientific standpoint, and has no theology at all; it possesses only a strict ethic, a living Mythos, and passionate hope for the future." Of course, Troeltsch also points out, that is very reflective of the New Testament and especially close to the spirit of the synoptic gospels, although all three types are rooted in the New Testament and so validly Christian. Christianity began as a lower-class religion of men of no great education.

In looking at the potentialities for distortion in the sect type, we may note the extreme fragility of the sect organization. Society, particularly religious society, is secondary to individuals and depends on their continued purity and constant effort to maintain it. The emphasis on purity leads to constant splits with those felt to be impure, whereas the stress on the objectivity of the sacraments in the church type can operate to maintain the unity of the more pure and less pure in a united body.

Even though in their early stages and potentially thereafter the sects have sometimes been radically critical of the world and have sometimes experimented with utopian alternatives to it—one thinks of the Anabaptists and their many successors—they have their own form of compromise with the world. Moderate sectarianism, remaining aloof from the world, has nevertheless been highly congenial to capitalism, liberalism, and democracy. The tightly structured sect has released the energy of autonomous enterprise in the secular world. Though highly intolerant within and quick to expel deviants, sectarians have often collaborated with secular liberals in support of civil liberties as against the pressures of a coercive church. Perhaps unintentionally the sects have played into the liberal drive to privatize and depoliticize religion.

In any case the influence of the sects on American society generally has been enormous. They have supplied one source for our individualism and of the pervasive idea that all social groups are fragile and in need of constant energetic effort (management? managers?) to maintain them. There is a deep, though also ironic, relationship between the spirit of the sects and the economic man who has been so important in the American past.

The mystical type is also not new in America—one can think of Anne Hutchinson already in the seventeenth century, and of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman in the nineteenth century, but it has certainly burgeoned as a major form in the late twentieth century. Troeltsch's mystical type is not necessarily mystical in the technical sense of the word, though Americans of this type have been open to a wide variety of influences from genuine mystics both Eastern and Western. Contemporary religious individualists of this type often speak of themselves as "spiritual" rather than "religious," as in "I'm not religious but I'm very spiritual," where "religious" means organized religion seen as oppressive and authoritarian as well as hypocritical. It is worth remembering that Troeltsch sees mysticism too, at least in its moderate forms, as rooted in the New Testament, particularly the Johannine writings which are closest to but do not actually become gnostic.

Mysticism has a social appeal almost opposite to sectarianism, though it shares the latter's individualism, indeed radicalizes and absolutizes it. For mysticism is found most often in affluent, well-educated classes, perhaps one reason why it flourishes in our affluent society. As Troeltsch describes it:

> [Mysticism] seeks the free spirituality and adaptability of the church, without the binding guarantees of ecclesiasticism; while on the other hand, in spite of its position based on subjective conviction and a voluntary theory and vital ethical verification, it still cannot tolerate the radical lack of culture, the "conventicle-like" narrowness which is bound up with the social reform of the sect, and its literal interpretation of the Gospel.
>
> It is neither church nor sect, and has neither the concrete sanctity of the institution nor the radical connection with the Bible. Combining Christian ideas with a wealth of modern views, deducing social institutions, not from the Fall but from a process of natural development, it has not the fixed limit for consciousness and the social power which the church possesses, but also it does not possess the radicalism and the exclusiveness with which the sect can set aside the state and economics, art and science.
>
> Full of the sense that today it still does represent the highest ethical ideals of humanity, it is still unable easily to formulate for itself the unwritten social program which the Gospel contains, nor to apply it clearly to the conditions which oppose it. Gradually, in the modern world of educated people, the third type has come to predominate. This means, then, that all that is left is

Only the church as a type of Christian social organization can effectively combat the radical individualism and the managerial manipulativeness of modern society.

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voluntary association with like-minded people, which is equally remote both from church and sect.

Thus mysticism, unlike in the sect, lacks any effective social discipline. Contemporary mysticism is the logical descendant of Thomas Paine's "My mind is my church," or Jefferson's "I am a sect myself." If pursued with thoroughness it would produce over two hundred million churches, one for each American. It is the commonest form of religion among those my research group has been interviewing, and many who sit in the pews of the churches and the sects are really religious individualists, though many more never go to church at all.

Just as radical religious individualism has played a role in the life of the Christian peoples from the beginning, it still has much to contribute today. Much of the freshness and vitality of American religion can be found in forms of "new consciousness," and they are not without their social contributions. The cultural revolution of the 1960s was essentially an upwelling of mystical religiosity; and the issues to which it made us sensitive—ecology, peace, opposition to nuclear weapons, internationalism, feminism—are still very high on our agenda. Yet the particular form of distortion to which the mystical type is prone is also more than evident—its inner volatility and incoherence, its extreme weakness in social and political organization, and above all its particular form of compromise with the world, namely its closeness to psychological man in his pursuit of self-centered experiences in preference to any form of social loyalty or commitment.

ALL THREE TYPES have their virtues as well as their characteristic potentialities for distortion. All are biblical and legitimate Christian alternatives. We can certainly see how modern sectarianism and mysticism were responses to the distortions of traditional church religion. And yet can we not say that today the future not only of the Christian faith but of anything like a decent society depends on the survival and viability of the church type in Troeltsch's sense? It may seem odd, even arrogant, for a Protestant sociologist to address the readers of a Catholic journal on the virtues of the church. But I suspect that it is not wholly inappropriate. The valid self-criticism following Vatican II may have obscured the importance of the church model for some Catholics. The recent emphasis on small, egalitarian base communities centering on the Eucharist has its value; but as an exclusive emphasis these base communities could easily repeat the errors of Protestant sectarianism—they would end by reinforcing privatization and depoliticization rather than combating them. I think only the church type has a chance to combat effectively the self-destructive tendencies of modern society, and I would say that to fellow Protestants, who have never completely abandoned the church model, as well as to Catholics. Let us remember that Troeltsch does not put the three models on the same level:

> So far as the form of this organization is concerned, it has become evident that the church-type is obviously superior to the sect-type and to mysticism. The church-type preserves inviolate the religious elements of grace and redemption; it makes it possible to differentiate between divine grace and human effort; it is able to include the most varied degrees of Christian attainment and maturity, and therefore it alone is capable of fostering a popular religion which inevitably involves a great variety in its membership. In this respect the church-type is superior to the sect-type and also to mysticism. This is why the main current of historical Christianity becomes the "History of the Church," and this is why the first result of the missionary work of the early church was "the universal Christian church."

I am not arguing for a reassertion of the medieval or Tridentine church model. The church, like the sect and mysticism, must find the right form for the historical moment. But I am saying that only the church as a type of Christian social organization can effectively combat the radical individualism and the managerial manipulativeness of modern society. Only the church can resist the cooptation into nothing more than a form of therapy that the privatization and depoliticization of modern religion implies. It cannot do this alone. It must be complemented by a new understanding of citizenship and the common good in political life. The problem is illustrated by the issue of nuclear war. The danger cannot be dispelled by managers and therapists. It is they who have brought us to the brink and lulled us into acquiescence. The church as the body of Christ can remind us that we will survive only insofar as we care for one another. As Christians and as citizens we might just possibly recover an idea of the common good, of that which is good in itself and not just the good of private desire. The task of making the church viable and effective in today's world is one that demands our intelligence and our strength and our prayers. There is nothing else today of greater importance.

Screen

HERZOG OF THE JUNGLE

ANOTHER RAIDER OF THE LOST ART

THE OPENING IMAGE of Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo* is the Cayahuari Yacu in South America, a mist-shrouded jungle to which the Indians refer as "the land where God didn't finish Creation." Despite the strangeness of the place, the image has déjà vu quality, for it's very like the opening of an earlier Herzog movie, *Hearts of Glass*, where the mists are those of high, icy mountains. In my previous column I was talking about the misfortune of great filmmakers who are doomed by their own originality. Their initial success with the medium makes their subsequent work look self-derivative. The example I was discussing last time was Michelangelo Antonioni, whose new film, *Identification of a Woman*, has been made too much in the shadow of his classic *L'Avventura*. In *Fitzcarraldo*, Werner Herzog's career takes a similar turn. Part of the reason the film is even worth talking

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about is that the debacle of its making was recorded in a documentary entitled *Burden of Dreams* by Les Blank. Between Blank's film and Herzog's own, we realize that Herzog's imagination is becoming a kind of human maelstrom. It tries to draw everything within its view, including jungles, into itself.

Fitzcarraldo is the story of a ne'er-do-well at the turn of the century who wants to build an opera house in a Peruvian backwater. To finance his scheme, he tries to establish a rubber plantation in inaccessible jungle. The original stars were Jason Robards and Mick Jagger. But when the shooting schedule was already half finished, both of them had to quit the film. Since Herzog was also having trouble with some Indians whose participation was crucial, he decided to start over again almost from scratch. He prevailed upon Klaus Kinski, star of three of his earlier films, to take over the lead; and from his base in Iquito, Peru, he moved his primary locations fifteen hundred miles up-river into the jungle interior. All the difficulties he was having at this point only seemed to strengthen his resolve. He calmly told Blank, "If I abandoned this project, I would be a man without dreams. . . . I live my life, or I end my life, with this project."

At the new location, Herzog worked with a more cooperative Indian tribe, the Campas. A theme running through Blank's movie is that truly primitive tribes like this will soon vanish. If the jungle where the Campas live continues being cleared at the present rate, it will be gone by 2010. Herzog therefore arranged that title to the land he had acquired as a location would revert to the Indians upon his film's completion. No oil companies will be allowed in. Yet it's hard to imagine how they could despoil the terrain more roughly than Herzog did. His script called for the Indians to help Fitzcarraldo pull a full-fledged riverboat, intact, over a steep isthmus separating two rivers. To accomplish this, Herzog had a huge tract of jungle cut right down to mud. Thousands of trees were absorbed into his "dreams," and disappeared there.

What emerges from Blank's film is the sheer enormity of Herzog's ego, his ability to see everyone and everything as an aspect of himself. At one point, for instance, he talks admiringly of those Campas who reached his location on foot rather than by the air service he provided. This is a bit of self-admiration, for he once did something similar. When a friend became sick in Munich, he walked there from Paris, instead of flying, as a "protest" against the illness. At another point in *Burden,* Herzog is examining an arrow with which a Campas has been shot by another tribe. Herzog muses that he might give the bloody arrow to his son, who would be "excited" to know it actually hit someone. This is the kind of ghoulishness on which the humor in Herzog's *Nosferatu* is based. We see that he is capable of turning both the arrow and the Indian whom it struck into mere figments of his imagination. When a Campas war party leaves to revenge the incident, thus halting production, Herzog remarks dejectedly, "I'm running out of fantasy."

Between the regard Herzog has for the Campas one minute and the callousness he shows toward them the next, the only consistency is that of the self, Only in his all-consuming personality are such contraditions of feeling reconciled. Notice, also, how easily his mind slides over discrepancies between real life and his fantasy life. When an Indian is attacked in reality, he reacts as a character might in his films. The reason he gives for going fifteen hundred miles to shoot scenes that might have been done near Iquito is that the distance and isolation in the jungle will bring out "special qualities" in his actors. One suspects, however, that the special quality he wants is actually being induced in himself. It's this heady confusion of reality and fantasy that is possible for him only when the former becomes as dangerous as what is being depicted in the latter.

These conditions existed only once before on a Herzog film, when he made *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*. Just as the conflicting attitudes expressed in Blank's documentary finally come together only in Herzog himself, all the eclectic allusions *Burden* makes to Herzog's earlier work meet in *Aguirre*. That film is the triumph Herzog hoped to repeat with *Fitzcarraldo*. It's the other film for which he went off into the jungle with Kinski. When he took Kinski up-river again after the initial setbacks on the new movie, Herzog was making a desperate attempt to save himself by re-creating risks that had worked out so well before. *Aguirre* is Herzog's best film. Its title character is the ultimate Herzog hero, a complete megalomanaic for whom Fitzcarraldo is the closest counterpart.

In *Burden*, Herzog summarizes the plot of *Fitzcarraldo*, explaining how the boat is dragged over the isthmus only to be cut loose by the Indians on the other side. It crashes down the rapids there, miraculously staying afloat, but in the end landing back at Iquito with nothing to show for the effort. Herzog reflects that Fitzcarraldo is able "to turn it into some kind of victory, a very painful one." That's the best Herzog could hope for as well, having merged too completely with his hero. In the jungle, everything went wrong, worse than in Iquito. The pulley system attached to the boat was so overtaxed that the engineer in charge resigned, warning there was a seventy-percent chance the cables would snap and kill many of the Indians working them. Although the cables held, impending disasters like this prompted Herzog to an even greater hubris than before. He began to talk as if nature had failed rather than his film. "The trees here are vile and base," he declared. "Nature is in misery. The birds are in misery. They don't sing. They just screech in pain. . . . The only harmony is overwhelming and collective murder."

Near the end of the shooting schedule, when the boat went over the rapids, Herzog again risked other people's life and limb to get what he wanted. Yet these scenes are anti-climactic and unaffecting. They lack even in excitement. As the boat thrashes around in the rapids, its propellers churning though it's supposed to be adrift, it seems only a last, perfect image of Herzog himself, foundering in the chaos of his own plot. That plot has been fatally flawed since the beginning. First Fitzcarraldo is obsessed with building an opera house in Iquito; in order to finance his dream, he becomes equally obsessed with

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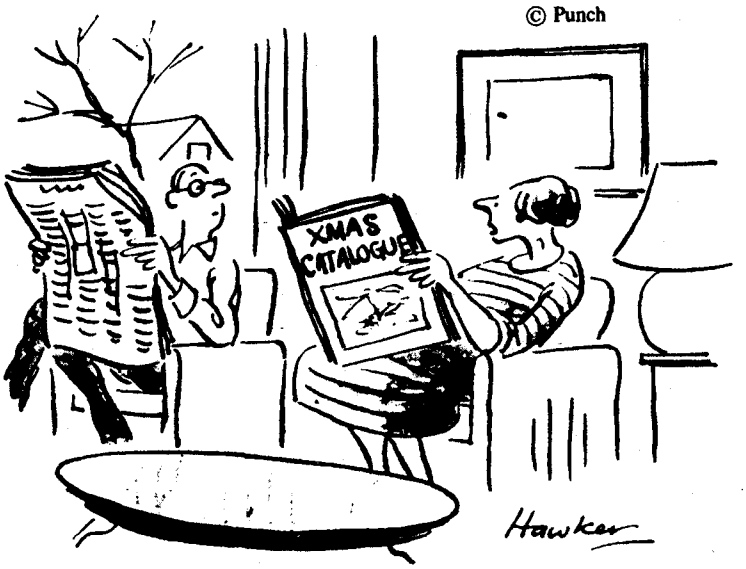

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starting a rubber plantation in the jungle; then, in order to get to the rubber trees, he becomes obsessed with dragging a riverboat over an isthmus. . . . He is a man obsessed with obsession itself. Although Herzog clearly wants us to see him as a sympathetic and romantic character, he is someone in whom obsession becomes detached, abstract, the way it is in *Macbeth* and *Richard III*. His behavior suggests that making movies has become the same kind of obsession for Herzog.

When he made *Aguirre*, Herzog went off into the jungle because he was inspired, and for the same reason, he overcame the difficulties that he faced there. Now he goes into the jungle and purposely creates difficulties in order to become inspired. He's gotten the whole process backwards, with the result that it doesn't work for him any more. There comes a point when artists, like oil companies, shouldn't go on uprooting trees in the name of progress. For all his physical courage and bravado, Herzog has not yet faced the one truth that requires moral courage from an artist. This is the possibility that, having nothing more to say, he should fall silent. So few people in any walk of life have the character to do that. As I said at the beginning of my previous column, out of the whole history of modern art I can think of only one example, Marcel Duchamp.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Books: CRITICS' CHRISTMAS CHOICES

James Carroll

JAMES CARROLL *has just published his fourth novel,* Family Trade *(Little, Brown).*

THE GREAT POWER of the Christmas narrative—how the earthly life of this person began—depends on our knowledge of the Paschal narrative—how his life ended. It is the *whole* story of Christ's life that moves us, precisely because it *is* a whole and as such represents a victory over the disjointedness that seems to characterize the earthly lives of the rest of us.

Disjointedness is the word that comes to mind to describe the lives of the great writers remembered in *Poets in Their Youth: A Memoir* by Eileen Simpson (Random House, $15.50, 256 pp.). Simpson gives us intimate portraits of John Berryman, to whom she was married from 1942 to 1956, Randall Jarrell, Robert Lowell and Delmore Schwartz. One cannot, of course, consider the beginnings of those brilliant careers without an eye cocked on their tragic endings. These poets and others of their generation seemed to squander themselves—their capacities for the simple pleasures and duties of ordinary life. That their squandering was not on high life but on work that issued in some of the greatest writing of our time is what rescued them from pathos and makes them compelling figures. Their place in our hearts is only made more secure by this troubling memoir.

How can people so gifted for the truthful and beautiful use of language live such sad, unbeautiful lives? That old question was raised again this year when John Gardner, arguably our most serious religious novelist, died a brutish death in a motorcycle accident. His last book, *Mickelsson's Ghosts* (Knopf, $16.95, 590 pp.), is a novel about a contemporary man of letters whose life is a complete shambles. His agony is like Job's in all respects but one; it comes of his own self-destructiveness. Still Gardner told Mickelsson's story with such bravery—humor like his is the highest form of courage—and with such compassion—it was his own story, clearly—that the reading of it, and this is the wonder of good writing, is pure pleasure, a joy.

Tom McHale was a gifted writer who focused on the black-comic element in human disjointedness. In the novel he published this year, *Dear Friends* (Doubleday, $16.95, 378 pp.), the protagonist, James Sutherland, is a failed suicide who is haunted by a prankster who stages false suicides. The novel ends with a suicide. This time out McHale moved from the wildly extravagant to the dangerously extreme, and it cost him. In a farce about suicide, one must be more wry than sardonic, more profound than grave. The action of the novel takes place on Christmas when Sutherland's own child is born. He thinks that he is rescued at last. Then he learns that the newborn child is the prankster's, not his. McHale turned the Christmas story on its ear; what if the longed-for child has come not as salvation, but as the final disappointment?

When Tom McHale killed himself last spring one sensed that the desperation he so vividly rendered here got the better of him. He was a man of talent and sensitivity. His place won't be adequately taken by anyone.

Good writers like these serve above all to remind us that we need to be redeemed and that we cannot redeem ourselves. Out of that awareness—in religion it is called humility—the eternal Word of God springs again. Good writers quicken our senses, preparing us to hear the glad tidings, even if they fail to do as much for themselves.

Our hope for these writers at Christmas lies in the belief that the Saving Word is spoken to them too, whether, through the clamor of their unhappiness, they heard it or not.

Elizabeth Cullinan

ELIZABETH CULLINAN's *short stories have appeared in* The New Yorker. *She is the author of two novels,* House of Gold *and, most recently,* A Change of Scene *(Norton). She teaches at Fordham University.*

"I LOVE REALITY," a friend recently said to me, and in the passionate spirit of that declaration I recommend *An Unsuitable Attachment* by Barbara Pym. (Dutton, $12.50, 256 pps.). Anglicanism and anthropology are the disciplines that Miss

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Pym's people struggle with as the writer, reveling in details of English character and custom, bares the state of perpetually conflicting emotions out of which we all speak and even act. This, her sixth book, sends Mark Aigner, vicar of a North London church, off to Rome at the head of an expedition that includes Ianthe Broome whose attachment to John Challow is unsuitable because he's several years younger than she.

Towards the end of Nina Bawden's latest novel, Andrew says to his wife Laura, "Try walking naked. There might be more enterprise in it." She replies, "That's a quotation." Laura writes entertaining novels about middle-class English life, and *Walking Naked* (St. Martin's Press, $10.95, 221 pp.) represents her telling of a soberer story. During a Saturday in March, she and Andrew meet with business associates of his, attend a party, call on her aged parents, and visit the prison where her son from a previous marriage is confined on charges of drug smuggling; Laura's reflections on the twisted events preceding her second marriage constitute the substance of the story, but Mrs. Bawden's subject is always happiness and the lengths to which we must go for its sake.

Richard Yates's heroes suffer from self-consciousness of an exacting and exalted kind. Most of the stories in *Liars in Love* (Delacorte/Seymour Lawrence, $14,95, 272 pp.) concern men hamstrung by their reluctance to kid themselves and others, but Mr. Yates's beautifully compact sentences make the bleakest scenes vivid, the sorriest truths bracing. "Regards at Home" gives us Bill Grove, who lives unfashionably with his mother, till he marries and moves to Greenwich village where ". . . what few parties we went to were most often composed of other young office workers as square as ourselves . . ." Carol and Warren Matthews of the title story find the breakup of their marriage mostly awkward: ". . . they seemed unable to do anything at all in their small, tidy basement flat without getting in each other's way. 'Oh, sorry,' they would mutter after each clumsy little bump or jostle . . ." And the London where this occurs is ". . . big and drab and unwelcoming."

But the late Stevie Smith, a Londoner, wrote, "In this northern suburb where I have lived all my life, the colours are exquisite." Previously uncollected writings of hers have been edited by Jack Barbera and William McBrien and published under the breezy title, *Me Again* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $15.95, 360 pp.). Blithe though Stevie Smith often was, she twice attempted suicide, but in these pages death is repeatedly overruled by the writer's pleasure in life and its redemptive routine. In this she might be a super heroine, Barbara Pym-style, except for her refusal to be distracted: ". . . One gets strained, feels guilty, sad and bad. And so falls into despair . . ." In better spirits she tells us, "Friendship and the revolt from friendship is the stuff of life . . ." And: "In the middle of every morning I leave the kitchen and have a glass of sherry with Aunt. I can only say this is glorious."

Richard P. McBrien

FATHER RICHARD P. McBRIEN *is chairman of the theology department at the University of Notre Dame. His books include* What Do We Really Believe? *and* Roman Catholicism.

LEADING my list is Karl Rahner's *Concern for the Church: Theological Investigations XX* (Crossroad, $12.95, 191 pp.). I should argue that no seminar or course on Rahner can responsibly neglect this major statement. For those who have been led to believe that Rahner's theology is always safely abstract, speculative, academic, and obscure, this book is absolutely required reading. The volume contains some of Rahner's most pointed theological essays on current pastoral problems: faith, magisterium, women in the church, individual freedom, the abiding importance of Vatican II, ecclesiastical structures, and spirituality. Little wonder that one traditionalist reviewer has already written off the work as the musings of a scholar in his dotage. It is far from that. What we have here is pure Rahner, drawing out the practical conclusions of his fundamental theological method and vision. If one reads nothing else from this list, one should read and ponder this book.

Avery Dulles is always clear, always balanced, always systematic, and always constructive. His *A Church to Believe In: Discipleship and the Dynamics of Freedom* (Crossroad, $14.95, 200 pp.) will not disappoint those who have come to expect excellent work from him. Well known for his models approach to the church, Dulles here adds a sixth to his original list: community of disciples. His two chapters on the magisterium are particularly forthright and historically illuminating.

David Tracy's *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (Crossroad, $24.50, 467 pp.) has been out a while and needs no fresh boost from this quarter. It is a major work. Some have found fault with one aspect or another of this massive effort, or may even have been suspicious of the whole project. But all will have to admit that Tracy is a scholarly pacesetter—a theologian from whom one learns not only in terms of content but also in terms of industry, care, insight and a disarming modesty.

Charles Curran and Richard McCormick continue to enrich us with the third in their series of *Readings in Moral Theology: The Magisterium and Morality* (Paulist Press, $7.95, 512 pp.), providing useful contributions from Karl Rahner, Avery Dulles, Yves Congar, Raymond Brown, and the editors themselves.

Donald Nicholl's *Holiness* (The Seabury Press, $7.95, 158 pp.) is among the best books of its kind. It is at once lucid and profound, learned and unpretentious, Catholic and ecumenical. In a field where so much bad thinking and writing has passed for authentic Christian spirituality, this one sets a refreshingly high standard.

Thomas Groome's *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision* (Harper & Row, $12.95, 296 pp.) has recently appeared in paperback. Like spirituality, religious education has sometimes suffered from superficialities and how-to-ism. Groome's is the first real attempt to develop a coherent statement on the meaning and task of religious

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education in light of some of the most important theological, biblical, philosophical, and social scientific findings of the last several decades. The positive reaction to the book suggests that he has largely succeeded.

Elizabeth Janeway

ELIZABETH JANEWAY's *books include* Man's World, Woman's Place, Between Myth and Morning, Powers of the Weak, *and, most recently,* Cross Sections *(Morrow) a collection of reviews, essays, and speeches from the past decade.*

KNOWING HISTORY, it's said, can keep us from making the same mistakes twice. I doubt this optimistic rule always works, but solid data from the past can certainly confute myth and assuage anxiety. It's excitement, though, that's the real reward for reading history, a sense of past life that enlarges the present. Here are half a dozen lively works, some written by scholars, all accessible to the general reader. Many of them marry illustrations to exceptional texts so that each illuminates the other.

First, Fernand Braudel's *The Structure of Everyday Life*, first volume in a series on *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century* (Harper & Row, $28.85, 623 pp.). The days of our ancestors' lives go on show before us: work and leisure, squalor and luxury, drudgery and deprivation, revolutionary hopes, stratagems for getting by, inventions, folk wisdom, food, clothes, tools, houses, travel, all woven together into a solid structure so real we might almost move in ourselves, so real that the differences from today make clear how change becomes irreversible process.

Another volume edited by an articulate scholar, Jerome Blum, concentrates on rural life, where dreams of a golden age tend to cluster. *Our Forgotten Past: Seven Centuries of Life on the Land* (Thames and Hudson, $27.50, 240 pp.) brings "the world we have lost" down almost to the present day: witness the grinning Swedish peasant beaming slyly out of the early twentieth century. Blum and the other authoritative contributors ignore neither the feasts nor the famines, the peasants' labor nor the nobles' elegant indulgence, neither the support a close community offers nor its constricting peer pressure. One point for advocates of Reaganomics to ponder: traditional values and practices have always been at war with progressive land use and, especially, with "the free market."

Rebecca West's *1900* (Viking, $19.95, 192 pp.) provides a look at the past by someone who lived it, and a perfect example of how we who weren't there can get things wrong, falsify emphasis, and miss the inner song of experience. A wise old woman judges the years and events that a brilliant young woman lived through before they were history. In *Out to Work* (Oxford, $19.95, 400 pp.), Alice Kessler-Harris mines the overlooked record of wage-earning women in the United States. Uncomfortable facts crop up to confound pleasant fables. Unmarried women in Colonial America "often faced starvation unless the town would support them." The feminization of poverty began early, and continued. In the New Deal years, "Male WPA workers got five dollars a day; women, three dollars a day." This is women's history becoming something even bigger: a look at society's need for women's work and its agonizing confusion over rewarding and valuing the workers fully.

Add a novel: *A Chain of Voices* by André Brink (William Morrow, $15.50, 525 pp.), which recreates pioneer life in South Africa in the 1820s. The tragedy of that beautiful, fertile land is prefigured in the culture clash of Boer farmers and original inhabitants already being uprooted. As good and moving a novel as the year has seen.

Last, a book of pictures to open and fall into entire: *Old France*, Volume One of *The Work of Atget* (Preface, John Szarkowski; Notes, Maria Morris Hombourg, The Museum of Modern Art/New York Graphic Society, $40, 177 pp.). Eugene Atget's landscape whose barns and houses, haystacks and fishing boats, rutted roads and pollarded trees bear mute witness to human presence. Undistracted by "period" figures and fashions, we look right back into "Our Forgotten Past," secret, mysterious, unforgettable. This is Maigret's France, where life goes on inside, behind closed shutters—but the church tower looms, all-seeing, its bells waiting to call together the sullen and the simple, the greedy and the work-worn. "We do what we have to do," our ancestors tell us, and in these pictures we can share the heaviness of their necessity, the inventive pragmatism of their reality.

Eric Foner

ERIC FONER *is professor of history at Columbia University.*

IN THE WRITING of American history, 1982 may well be remembered as the year the "new histories" achieved maturity. A series of outstanding works combining graceful style, careful research, and provocative conclusions exemplified the new concerns (such as the historical experience of blacks, women, and labor) and new methods that transformed the study of history during the past decade. That all of them were published by university presses reflects, unfortunately, the accelerating retreat of commercial houses from the publication of serious works of American history.

In order of chronology, the most significant new works are:

Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790* (University of North Carolina Press, $29.50, 451 pp.) Uniting the approach of the cultural anthropologist and the social historian, Isaac paints a compelling portrait of the social order constructed by Virginia's gentry and of the dual revolution — the Great Awakening and the struggle for independence — that transformed the world they had made. Architecture, landscape planning, forms of oral communication and slave culture are only some of the diverse elements from which this tale of the rise and fall of a distinctive society are constructed.

Harry J. Watson, *Jacksonian Politics and Community Conflict* (Louisiana State University Press, $32.50, 354 pp.) At first glance simply one among innum-

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erable "local studies" (covering Jacksonian politics in a single North Carolina county), Watson's book actually has far broader ramifications. It is the first study successfully to relate Jacksonian politics to the expansion of commercial capitalism and its disruptive impact on traditional values, thus providing the basis for a long-awaited reinterpretation of the Age of Jackson.

The interplay of traditional ideals and economic change also informs Nick Salvatore's *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist* (University of Illinois Press, $24.95, 432 pp.) Not only does this biography replace Ray Ginger's earlier study as the standard life of Debs, but, drawing upon the most recent work in labor and social history it demonstrates how Debs's socialism rested on ideals of independent manhood and republicanism that late nineteenth-century corporate capitalism was fatally undermining.

Rosalind Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres* (Yale University Press, $19.95, 288 pp.) Forcefully argued and gracefully written, this work explores the achievements of the first generation of women social scientists, who challenged inherited ideas about innate sexual differences and identities around the turn of the century. It not only sheds new light on the intellectual roots of modern feminism, but advances an irrefutable indictment of an academic world that systematically excluded talented women from teaching posts while allowing their male mentors to lay claim to their pioneering scholarship.

Finally, special mention should also be made of *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation*, Series II: *The Black Military Experience*, edited by Ira Berlin, Joseph P. Reidy and Leslie S. Rowland (Cambridge University Press, $37.50, 896 pp.) The first volume to appear in a projected multi-part collection of documents culled from the virtually untouched holdings of the National Archives, this brings together evidence concerning the role of the black soldier in the Civil War, and its impact on race relations. When completed, the entire series will transform our understanding of slavery, abolition, and the still unresolved legacy of emancipation.

Robert N. Bellah

ROBERT N. BELLAH, *Ford Professor of Sociology and Comparative Studies and chairman of the sociology department at the University of California, Berkeley, is currently collaborating on a research project on American mores, the results of which will appear in a book entitled* Habits of the Heart.

I WOULD LIKE to start with two books by close collaborators in my current research. The first is Steven M. Tipton's *Getting Saved from the Sixties* (University of California Press, $19,95, 364 pp.) Tipton, a master of the tape-recorded interview, talked to members of three exotic groups—a Zen Buddhist meditation center, a millennial Christian sect and *est*—in order to see why ordinary middle-class young people whose lives were disrupted by the cultural confusions of the sixties were attracted to them and how they changed as a result. The study sheds as much light on central American values as on the exotic groups themselves. The interviews are themselves often eloquent and Tipton's analysis incisive. This is sociology combined with ethics and history and it is, as Daniel Bell says, "a lovely book."

The second is William M. Sullivan's *Reconstructing Public Philosophy* (University of California Press, $19.95, 238 pp.) Sullivan, a social philosopher with an excellent grasp of social science, reviews some of the ablest current writing on social policy and on the philosophical and ethical basis of social policy, discerning therein the liberal individualism that is such an important strand of our culture. While appreciative of the contributions of those he analyzes—writers such as Bell, Heilbroner, Rawls, Nozick and Kohlberg—he nonetheless finds their liberalism inadequate as a public philosophy. The book is particularly exciting in its depiction of an alternative public philosophy, rooted in Plato and Aristotle but also in American republicanism and philosophical pragmatism, that could provide a more viable set of directives for our public life.

Jackson Lears has written a fascinating book on anti-modernism in America in the period 1880-1920: *No Place of Grace* (Pantheon Books, $18.50, 375 pp.) Lears is interested in the many forms the revolt against modern industrial society took among a variety of Eastern intellectuals around the turn of the century. Religious anti-modernism gets the most space and consists largely of those attracted to Anglo-Catholicism and Japanese Buddhism. Lears admirably combines cultural and psychological analysis and is particularly interesting when he finds the roots of our current therapeutic culture in this period.

Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* (University of Notre Dame Press, $15.95, 252 pp.) has written one of the most important books of the decade. This book, already widely reviewed, needs little further comment from me, except to say that the negative reviews, which have not been few, suggest the extent to which MacIntyre is really opposing "the self-image of the age." The book is largely a stunning critique of current moral philosophy and moral practice. MacIntyre's profound pessimism does not allow him to suggest much in the way of alternatives but his book is invaluable to those for whom the search for an alternative is still viable.

Finally, let me mention *The Flight from Authority* (University of Notre Dame Press, $26.50, 307 pp.) by Jeffrey Stout, a young scholar much influenced by MacIntyre. The book has much to say about the impasse that has been reached when modern philosophy, theology and ethics have sought to be "autonomous." The importance of the history of thought to our current problems of thinking is beautifully illustrated.

Thomas Keating

THOMAS KEATING, *Abbot of St. Joseph's Abbey, in Spencer, for twenty years, now lives at St. Benedict's Monastery in Colorado. His books include* Crisis of Faith, *and* And the Word Was Made Flesh.

FOR THOSE interested in rooting their activities in Christian prayer and motivation, the following books are especially helpful.

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In his book, *In His Spirit* (Paulist, $4.95, 114 pp.), Richard Hauser distinguishes two images of the self: the self-*in*-God put forward by St. Paul and the Western image of the self-*outside*-God, which has been the commonly accepted model in Christian instruction for several centuries. The latter springs from the cultural conditioning of Cartesian philosophy and Newtonian physics and is a distortion of the Gospel. Hauser's clear and practical analysis of these two fundamentally opposed views of the self with their respective clusters of attitudes is invaluable for establishing the spiritual journey on the solid foundation of revelation. The New Testament model emphasizes interior dispositions; the Western model, external acts. In the former, the Spirit initiates all good desires and we respond; in the latter, self initiates all good acts and God rewards. Teachers of Christian doctrine and spirituality need to recognize the virtual eclipse of the scriptural model and the urgent need to return to it. Hauser warns us, however, that the attitudes arising from the Western model continue to function even when they have been intellectually rejected; and suggests ways of integrating the scriptural model into the whole of one's life.

Blessed Simplicity, by Raimundo Pannikar (Seabury, $17.95, 202 pp.), addresses itself to the contemplative dimension of the spiritual journey. While thoroughly accepting the basic values of traditional monastic life, Pannikar perceives a similar commitment to these values in the lives of genuine seekers of the Absolute who cannot identify with the structures of the cloister. The body of the book deals with these essential values or dispositions. Thus, it serves to deepen and enlarge the scriptural model of the self so well identified and clarified by Richard Hauser. Panniker challenges cloistered monks and nuns of our time to evaluate their place in the contemporary church not in view of radically changing it, but of making the essence of monastic tradition more available to the present and arising generation. This does not mean multiplying cloistered monks and nuns, but sharing the core of monastic spirituality — the contemplative dimension — with everyone on the spiritual path in ways that are congruent with the facts of our time. No one knows whether such sharing will strengthen or impoverish the tradition. The challenge awaits the creative solutions of monks and nuns well-grounded in their tradition and open to contemporary spirituality. Many crucial points regarding monastic renewal are faced head-on in this book, which make it essential reading both for monastics and those interested in the vast ramifications of the monastic lifestyle as a model for the formation of Christian community and as a teacher of contemplative prayer, reverence for work, respect for the earth, use of leisure, concern for world problems, and social action.

Care of Mind, Care of Spirit, by Gerald May, M.D. (Harper & Row, $11.95, 164 pp.) is notable for the clarity, depth, and practicality of its handling of the psychiatric dimensions of spiritual direction. Dr. May is able to distinguish the roles of psychiatrist, pastoral counselor, and spiritual director, giving each its due without confusion of roles or relinquishing the primacy of grace with its secret, healing, strengthening, and transforming effectiveness.

Steven Lawson

STEVEN LAWSON *adapted* The Elephant Man *for television and is currently working on his first full-length play.*

NEAR the end of Chekhov's *The Sea Gull*, the heroine Nina—scarred by personal anguish, yet still intent on a theatrical career—asserts that life "isn't about the fame, or the glory—it's how to *endure*." The two best books I read in 1982 focus, admittedly in very different ways, on endurance: its span, its many insidious forms, its ultimate exhaustions and glories.

Both were works of non-fiction. (Whether this is a subtle commentary on the pallid state of fiction these days, I don't know: suffice it to say that the power of these two real-life narratives far outstripped any "imaginative" efforts of the past year.) Sally Beauman's account of the first one hundred years of the Royal Shakespeare Company (*The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History Of Ten Decades*, Oxford University Press, $21, 388 pp.) was, quite simply, the best in-depth analysis of a major artistic organization I've come across. Miss Beauman may have an advantage on other journalists here—her husband is longtime RSC actor Alan Howard, currently starring in "Good" on Broadway—but the results are first-rate. This book seizes our attention like a good mystery: crammed with interesting characters, of a piece, hard to put down.

There are superb anecdotes: London critics attack the very idea of a major theater in Stratford-on-Avon ("110 miles from London . . . verges on the ridiculous"); unremitting financial crises; rivalry with the Old Vic (later the National Theatre); Trevor Nunn's accession to the RSC directorship "looking like every Vietnamese waiter in the world"; celebrities such as Olivier, Leigh, Gielgud, and Richardson testing the Stratford waters. And the last third of the book is a particular triumph: in a sweeping, year-by-year journal, Beauman vividly traces the innovations of Peter Hall and Nunn and such international successes as Peter Brook's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and the *Wars of the Roses*. All accomplished in the face of critical jeering, public bafflement, and—always—money problems. That the RSC has lasted this long is an achievement; that it's arguably the best theater troupe in the world is extraordinary, and a process Beauman recounts affectionately and with vigor.

I think Isak Dinesen would have grasped the essential heroism at the root of the RSC's growth into greatness: her own story of endurance was intimate, personal, inner; yet with reverberations far beyond her own frail being. Born in Denmark in 1885, she was a literary unknown until she turned fifty, when her *Seven Gothic Tales* was published. Soon after came *Out of Africa*—for many of us, the best book about that continent ever written—followed by *Winter's Tales*, *Last Tales*, *Anecdotes of Destiny*, and her final African memoir, *Shadows on the Grass*. She died in Denmark in 1962.

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What Judith Thurman's fine biography *(Isak Dinesen: The Life Of A Storyteller,* St. Martin's Press, $19.95, 495 pp.) makes apparent is Dinesen's multifaceted personality, the hall of mirrors she could call into play. "Tania," Karen Blixen (her married name), "Mrs. Karen," "Jerie," The Baroness." An almost incredibly complex woman, this: daughter of a noble father and middle-class mother, wife of a Baron struggling to run a coffee farm in Kenya, foster mother to innumerable natives and neighbors during her seventeen years in Africa, striking confectioner of ghost tales and naturalistic recollections. Inescapably, her Kenyan period was the chronological and — more significantly — the spiritual center of her long life, and in a very moving way her later years "back home" in Europe have the flavor of an extended elegy to a sharper, stronger, more challenging past. The bird-like old lady who survived on oysters and fruit juice, who traded quips with Marilyn Monroe on an American visit, who cast a loving but sardonic eye on those around her—Danes, Masai, literary rivals, loved ones—comes to life in Thurman's book. Herself the embodiment of "civilization" and, at the same time, in her turbans and hunter's garb, something wild, untamed, half-barbaric—Isak Dinesen lasted through many incarnations. *The Life of a Storyteller* suggests that she—like the Royal Shakespeare Company—will last for some time to come.

Karl E. Peters

KARL E. PETERS *is associate professor of philosophy and religion at Rollins College in Florida, and editor of* Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science.

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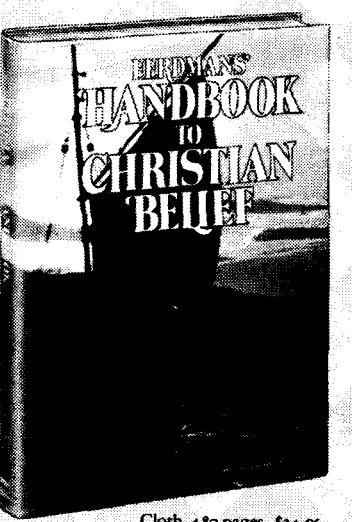

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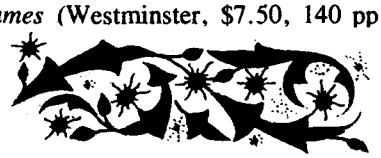
religiously in a scientific-pluralistic age. During the past few years several worthwhile books have been published that can help guide us in responding to this question.

Introducing us to the richness and diversity in a universe that has evolved over fifteen billion years, Eric Chaisson's *Cosmic Dawn* (Little, Brown, $14.95, 302 pp) beautifully presents the latest scientific theories on the origins of matter, life, and human culture. As the title indicates, Chaisson suggests we are still at the beginning of the universe; and we, who are children of the universe, have a significant role to play in its future evolution on our planet.

Two books by Nobel Laureate Sir John C. Eccles explore the human brain-mind in the context of the evolution of the universe. These Gifford Lectures, *The Human Mystery* (Springer International, $26, 255 pp.) and *The Human Psyche* (Springer International, $26.00, 279 pp.), argue for a scientifically unorthodox dualist-interactionist thesis on the human-brain-mind and relate this view to questions of human values and human purpose. While these books are not easy reading, with the aid of their many diagrams they are one of the best resources from the sciences for people to use when addressing questions about human nature.

Moving to religious pluralism, Catherine L. Albanese has written a very useful work on *America: Religions and Religion* (Wadsworth, $13.95, 389 pp.). A historian of religion, Albanese discusses both the plurality and unity of religion in America in terms of basic beliefs, rituals, ethical codes, and institutional organization. In addition to the usual analysis of major Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant traditions, she discusses examples of American Indian religion, occult and metaphysical movements, the influence of religions from the East, and regional religion in Southern Appalachia.

How does one make theological sense of the plurality of cultural traditions and how can one theologically use the insights of modern science? One helpful book is John Hick's *God Has Many Names* (Westminster, $7.50, 140 pp.).



Even though this series of essays is somewhat repetitious, Hick makes a convincing case that the future of religion involves the recognition of the many ways God has become known to different peoples at different times in human history. The basic reasons for the different views of God lie more with the diversity of human culture than with the nature of God itself.

Using the insights of modern science, Ralph Wendell Burhoe's *Toward a Scientific Theology* (Christian Journals, L9.50, 240 pp.; American distributor: *Zygon* Editorial Office, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida, $18.45) is a series of essays that not only synthesizes evolutionary theory and theology but offers a scientific hypothesis concerning the role of religion in human evolution. According to this Templeton prize-winner, the diversity of religious beliefs and practices share a common functional feature; they help develop human cooperative behavior that makes the rise and continuation of civilization possible. *Toward a Scientific Theology* is not easy reading, but along with the other books it is important for developing a coherent understanding of the meaning and purpose of human life in a scientific-pluralistic age.

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Saul Maloff

SAUL MALOFF, *a novelist and critic, contributes regularly to* Commonweal.

SAUL BELLOW is our incomparable urban writer: an urban intelligence and wiliness working on urban types, strategies for survival and transcendence, cityscape, extreme situations, insoluble dilemmas. Even if the setting was nominally the Mexican hinterland or some imagined African bush, one felt the presence and pressures of the great American city. In his recent novel (*The Dean's December*, Harper & Row, $13.95, 312 pp.), which shows no signs of diminished imaginative vigor or post-Nobel blues, the cities are two—his and the Dean's Chicago and Bucharest, the Dean's wife's native city. By broad strokes and in fine detail Bucharest is evoked as a contamination, a pestilence, the essence of an oppressive society governed by a threat always imminent and lurking and appearing more as a total petty inscrutable bureaucracy of unlimited and unquestionable power than as legions in jackboots or an omnipresent secret police; and in the great distance, powerfully recalled, Chicago throbs with energy, violence, corruption—no city upon a hill or light unto the nations, God knows, but of an immense roiling democratic vitality.

The English novelist and critic David Lodge populates this steadily interesting, often amusing and sometimes touching, finely formed and adroitly written novel (*Souls and Bodies*, Morrow, $12.50, 244 pp.) with a group of Catholic women and men and takes them, stage by stage, from their university days in the fifties through Vatican II and aggiornamento and the volcanic revolutionary changes in Catholic life and consciousness of the sixties and seventies. Virtually nothing in the history of the volatile, turbulent period is without its fictional representation—crises of faith and conscience, deviations and departures from immemorial practices, modes of conduct and habits of mind, clerical and lay, sacred and profane. Lodge writes from the inside, obviously, as a writer who has not only wit-

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nessed but experienced the convulsions and vicissitudes his characters endure; and if he is at times acerbic or satiric in tone and attitude, he is steadfastly decent, fairminded, compassionate, affectionate, save where even saints might falter, avert their gaze, faint dead away.

In the last days of the earth's turning, it must be that we'll be listening to some voice telling us the best of Isaac Bashevis Singer's magical stories. They cannot fall to fashion because they never heeded fashion: they unfold themselves as stories did in the old days, in the ancient manner. Nor fashions of sensibility: Singer is not interested in tiny tremors; he cares more about interior cyclones and invisible forces. Not all of the master's stories are first-rate—he's written too much, too fast for that; but a *Collected Stories* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $19.95, 610 pp.) that contains "Gimpel the Fool," "The Gentleman from Cracow," "The Spinoza of Market Street," "The Unseen," "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy," "The Letter Writer," "Old Love," "Passions," among many others as good or nearly so must be reckoned among the good things of the world worth taking with us.

In the by now rich tradition of *Annales* historiography, this lively, anecdotal, often surprising inquiry into the curious relations of food and culture—or of taste and sensibility—by Jean-François Revel, the fractious author of *Without Marx or Jesus* and *The Totalitarian Temptation, Culture and Cuisine* (Doubleday, $12.95, 289 pp.) is anything but an academic study (in the invidious sense—is there another sense?), though it is a learned work which delights in its learning almost as much as it does in good food and vintage wine, and in truly anathematizing the highly publicized nouvelle cuisine as a "new academicism."

Roland Barthes could be arcane, gnostic, enigmatic, even opaque; but far more often his slant, wonderfully original vision truly lit up the landscape and espied connections by creating them out of a void. His posthumous *Empire of Signs* (Hill & Wang, $12.95, 110 pp.), an astonishing series of glimpses into Japanese life and culture, and *A Barthes*

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Reader (Hill & Wang, $20, 495 pp.), edited with an Introduction by Susan Sontag, remind us of his lamentable, untimely death, a void no one else can quite fill. Selections from Susan Sontag's works are also gathered into a "Reader," offering us a welcome retrospective on that unfailingly interesting, valuable writer. So, too, is Tom Wolfe represented by a "Reader" (*The Purple Decades*, Farrar Straus & Giroux, $17.50, 396 pp.) cleverly illustrated by the multiple gifted author. There are others in the series. Homage must be paid to Farrar, Straus & Giroux and its "division" Hill and Wang as a publishing enterprise—one of the very few houses in the country, and perhaps the exemplary instance among them, to remain in this age of conglomerate hustle and the iron rule of the lipreading accountant consistently faithful to the nobel ideal of publishing books as if only quality mattered. Fancy that.

Madeleine L'Engle

MADELEINE L'ENGLE *has published over two dozen books. Her second novel,* A Severed Wasp, *will be published early next year by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.*

MY READING list each year is more apt to be of old books which are still around, rather than current books which vanish in a few months, unless the book is by one of my favorite authors. Books which have influenced me deeply in the past year include two by Laurens Van der Post, *A Story Like the Wind* (Harcourt, Brace, $3.95, 370 pp.) and *A Far Off Place* (Harcourt, Brace, $3.95, 311 pp.)

These books about a young white boy of French descent in very black Africa are, for me, deeply theological, with their sense of the unity of all creation, and their reminder that we are woefully out of touch with God's other creatures, the birds, the trees, those who are different, superficially, from the rest of us.

The Mirror Mind, by William Johnston, (Harper and Row, $10.95, 176 pp.) subtitled "Spirituality and Transformation," should be of interest to anyone concerned with the things of the spirit, as should my son-in-law's, the Reverend Alan Jones's book, *Exploring Spiritual Direction*, subtitled "An Essay on Christaian Friendship," published this past spring by Seabury Press ($12.95, 135 pp.).

And, on the same subject, basically, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters,* by Gary Zukav (Bantam, $3.95, 331 pp.). The comparison of the language of some of the quantum physicists and that of the medieval mystics is fascinating. I also love the fact that there cannot be a quantum. The quantum exists only in relationship; there must be quanta. These tiny subatomic particles cannot be studied objectively; to study them is to change them. They also appear to be able to talk without speaking: *there is neither speech nor language; but their voices are heard among them,* as the psalmist knew all those years ago. It is easy to tell from the books which have spoken most deeply to me where my own mind is turning at the moment. This spring, in the midst of the idiotic terror of the Falkland crisis, I was planting onion sets, and while I was getting my fingers deep into the rich earth, and smelling the pungent odors of the onion sets, the birds sang to me, a glorious song of affirmation. And I was given courage. And shortly thereafter I read in *A Story Like the Wind* that the birds know, and that when they change their song it is often to warn of danger, and I was grateful that this spring song was not a changed song, merely the usual joy of sun and wind and the greening world.

Marilyn Hacker

MARILYN HACKER's *most recent collection of poetry is* Taking Notice *(Knopf). She received the National Book Award in poetry in 1975 for* Presentation Piece. *She is editor of the feminist literary magazine,* 13th Moon, *and teaches at Columbia University.*

WHEN selecting books to give, and to keep, I most often choose volumes of poetry; professional self-interest aside, the excellent among them are books that will not be exhausted in one reading, books that should be owned because, after the first reading, they will likely be wanted again, at an hour or in a place where the library or a friend's bookshelf aren't possibilities. These are books I've returned to myself; I think others will do the same:

The Collected Poems Of Muriel Rukeyser (McGraw Hill, $17.95, hardcover, $9.95 paper, 588 pp.) contains the lifetime's poetic work of one of this country's major writers. Rukeyser, who died in 1978, was, throughout her lifetime, an activist, a polymath, an explorer. All these concerns were reflected in her work, from the book-length serial poem written in her twenties, in the voices of men and women workers in a West Virginia mining town, imprisoned by starvation wages and doomed by silicosis, to "The Gates," title poem of her last book, telling of the vigil of a writer in her sixties outside the prison where a Korean poet is incarcerated by his government for political dissidence. I would mention also her splendid sequence about the chosen experience of becoming a single mother at forty, written in 1950, when few would have considered that choice either political or "poetic." Rukeyser's style was open, experimental, and fluid: she used rhymed, metered, and free forms, internal and dramatic monologues, informed her work with her knowledge of history and of science. She was Whitmanian in her breadth and populism, but her "songs" were as likely to be of Akiba, Kathe Kollwitz, Wendell Willkie, or John Brown as of herself.

Chosen Poems – Old And New, by Audre Lorde, (Norton $5.95 paper, 115 pp.) brings together the poet's selections from earlier volumes: *Coal, First Cities, Cables to Rage, From a Land Where Other People Live,* and *New York Head Shop and Museum,* together with a group of new poems. (Many of the earlier volumes were small press publications, now hard to find.) This volume charts the development of the poet's incantatory and powerful voice, underscores the perpetual and uncompromising breadth of her concerns. Black, lesbian, mother, cancer survivor, urban woman; none of Lorde's selves has ever silenced the others; the counterpoint among them is

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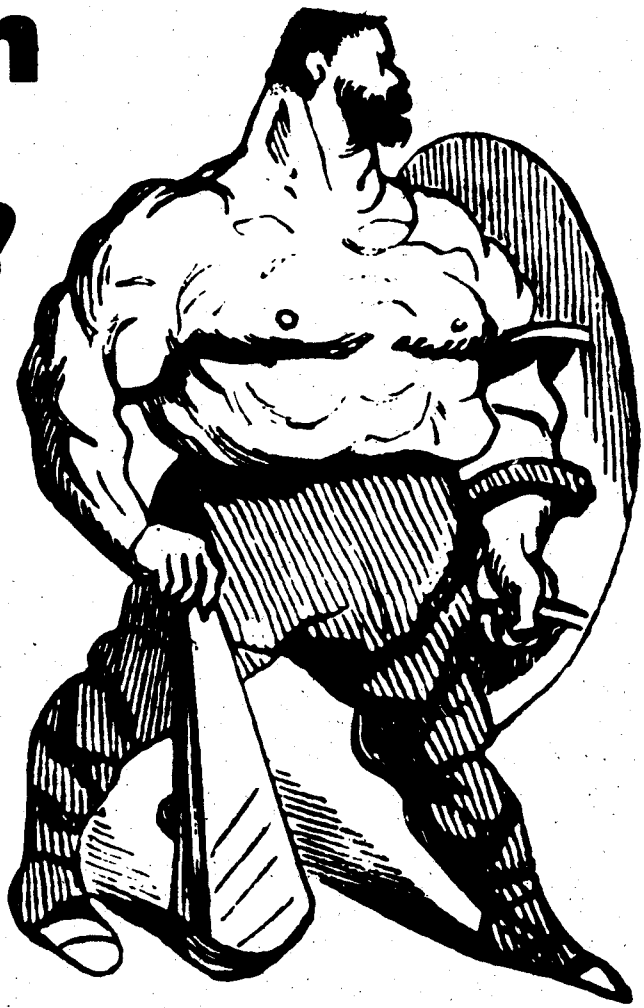
Is this Man a Devout Christian ?



You'd surely think so, the way things have been going. **The impression seems to have been created that Christians are a social menace.** Believers who protest our laissez-faire abortion climate and rally to traditional family values are now widely regarded as "right-wing bullies" and "moral fascists." Sad to say, there is an element of truth in these characterizations. Certain ambitious men have gotten a grip on the anti-abortion and profamily causes, twisting them to their own mean-spirited purposes. Strangely, these belligerent men cry about innocent life in the womb, but when it comes to war, nuclear holocaust, and the innocent lives of civilians, they are the last people around who give life the benefit of the doubt.

We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are acutely uncomfortable with this distortion of Christian values. We happily call ourselves orthodox Christians, but we don't believe the secular right-wing should set the agenda for the Church—for we dare not forget that our Lord is the Prince of Peace, and that without charity all our efforts on behalf of morality are but "a tinkling cymbal."

If this is your perspective on the Christian faith, you simply must look into the NEW OXFORD REVIEW. Our writers include some of the most invigorating minds in the Christian world: J.M. Cameron, Robert Coles, Christopher Derrick, Erazim Kohak, Juli Loesch, Arthur F. McGovern S.J., Sheldon Vanauken, and Robert E. Webber.

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often the material of her strongest poems. the contemporary classic "Black-studies," (1973) is a meditation in despair and hope, a mediation between the single threatened woman and the poet become almost-acknowledged legislator of her needing, angry people. The new poems review and renew urgencies: the trebly-endangered lives of "invisible" black women, the racist complicities white women and men of good will must acknowledge, the insistence that the woman Lorde is, personally and emblematically, not be forgotten, made invisible again, behind the powerful and public poet's persona.

Admit Impediment, by Marie Ponsot (Knopf, $5.95 paper, 123 pp.) is the poet's first published book, besides translations, in twenty-five years, yet hers is one of our mature, major, and prolific poetic voices. In a cumulative and uncomforted elegy to a friend dead at fifty, Ponsot challenges that silence, imposed from within and without, on women of her generation. The book's "Impediment" is, in the end, to the acceptance of circumscribed lives. In anger, in love, in wisdom, Ponsot celebrates emancipations: from constricting marriage, the toils of romantic love, from male power and female abnegation, from beloved parents and beloved children; the *magna mater* who nourishes and endures is found within. Ponsot's craft, in crowns of sonnets, sestinas, sustained sequences is stunning: she is particularly master of the sustained long poem generated by meditation and speculation; can also be concise and, blessedly, witty. John Keats, a Dominican *curandera*, the philosopher Susanne K. Langer, and the story-teller Perreault are merely some of Ponsot's subjects. As in her "Appendix of Predecessors," her work is an ongoing dialogue with the past and with the future.

Some One Sweet Angel Chile, by Sherley Anne Williams (William Morrow, $7.50 paper, 112 pp.) speaks in tongues and sings in many voices. It begins with an elegant and revelatory series of epistolary poems, "Letters From a New England Negro," written in the persona of an educated young black woman gone south, in 1867, to teach her newly-freed people. She learns as much as she teaches; the contradictions and rewards of the life she has left, as well as the situation she has come to, are unfolded with a clarity and complexity that were as satisfying to this reader as a 500-page novel. In a completely different vocabulary and rhythm, the middle sequence of poems celebrates Bessie Smith, and illuminates another facet of the history and heroism of black women. Here, in cadences echoing the blues, the author animates a chorus of men and women around the legendary Bessie to give a rounded and reverberating oratorio. The book's last section, in contemporary voices, often has for landscape the poet's native Southern California. The primacy of music continues as a theme, along with the complexity of relationships between black women and men. With a different perspective, the poet re-examines family, history, and the interstices between.

Huston Smith

HUSTON SMITH *is professor of philosophy and religion at Syracuse University. His new book,* Beyond the Post-Modern Mind, *has just been published by Crossroad.*

AS ONE who likes to feel oriented I scan a lot, like the radar beam that keeps sweeping its circle around an airport approach tower. Of the books that entered my orbit this year, four bounced back stronger signals than the rest. They came from four directions: from science, philosophy, religion, and the arts.

The book by a scientist was David Bohm's *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, $8.95, 218 pp.). For the layman half of it is unreadable physics, but the other half throws bridges to life as we directly experience it. Specifically, it sketches the outlines of a world view to replace the Cartesian-Newtonian model which no longer works. Bohm's model has things more interrelated than they were in previous scientific cosmologies. Given the hunger for wholeness in us all, the striking feature of this book is the extent to which a ranking physicist sees his field as validating that impulse. Wholeness isn't just an aspiration. It is the deepest truth about reality, a fact that awaits our discovery.

After Virtue, by Alasdair MacIntyre (Notre Dame, $7.95, 245 pp.) does for moral philosophy what Richard Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* did three years ago for epistemology; it critiques the prevailing approach and points a new direction. I do not think morality requires the rational justification MacIntyre is looking for, but his deeper point, that morality is grounded in sociology, is importantly right. To be more than wheel-spinning, moral theory must be about virtues that are genuinely esteemed, and only virtues that prove themselves in practices that are embedded in still-vital traditions *are* wholeheartedly esteemed. As our traditions have been eroded by the bureaucracy Weber so well described, virtues have lost their former centrality — hence the book's somber title. MacIntrye is provocative in importantly disturbing ways.

In the ninety-three years of its history, no lectureship in religion has rivaled the prestige of the Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh: (James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* and Niebuhr's *The Nature and Destiny of Man* are there for proof.) In this context, S.H. Nasr's *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Crossroad, $19.50, 341 pp.) arrives as a major event, Nasr being the first oriental to have been invited to deliver those lectures. For two hundred years authors have been filling libraries with books on Asia as seen by the West. Here we find the tables turned, though to speak precisely, it is not from an Asian perspective that Nasr describes the West, but from the standpoint of perennial truths the West has (temporarily?) lost sight of. His grounding in metaphysics gives his analysis a substance I seldom encounter. This book should last.

Saul Bellow is at once the most worldly and unworldly writer in America. He can be uproariously funny — not much of that in *The Dean's December* (Harper & Row, $13.95, 312 pp.) — but it is for his unworldly side that I read every book he writes. Through outlandish plots, stunning perceptions, and

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marvelous wit, he gets my complete attention and then moves in to create an opening. A chink in our everyday, contractual world appears, and in two or three sentences we are carried beyond. Or better, we are enabled ourselves to go beyond, for Bellow is never doctrinaire. It is a rare talent that he commands here; one which, for our secular but still aspiring age may be as affective a talent as there is.

On the day I finish boxing my compass with these four books, Annie Dillard's *Teaching a Stone to Talk* (Harper & Row, $12.95, 177 pp.) arrives, just in time to take its place at the square's center. So the circling radar beam shuts down on a 1982 mandala for book-lovers. Four approaches to the sacred center, the Tree of Life that Annie Dillard always brings to view.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 642)

question: "What was all the fuss about?"

It is, of course, not simply the passage of time that evokes the question; it is also the passing of one sociological form of Catholicism and the slow and still painful birth of another (or of others). When Pope John XXIII proposed *aggiornamento* as the guiding principle of the Council, he called into question many of the theological and pastoral assumptions of the previous century. Since the reign of Gregory XVI (whose *Mirari vos*, by the way, just had its largely uncelebrated 150th anniversary), official church policy, with only occasional exceptions, had sought to construct for Catholics an alternate world to inhabit, the *societas perfecta* called "Roman Catholicism," autonomous in its distinctive life and institutional frame and immunized from contamination by a modern world believed to be irretrievably opposed to Catholic principles. Pastoral practice and theological legitimation were very strictly associated, and anyone who suggested that "Roman Catholicism" was not the inevitable sociological form of the Catholic church was likely to find himself in difficulty.

From this perspective, the Council

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was, in effect, a referendum on the previous century's attitude towards the modern world, and, of course, the referendum did not turn out well for its defenders. The draft-documents prepared for the Council's deliberations are simple repetitions of the principles and pieties that had guided the construction and defense of "Roman Catholicism." That these were so decisively and in principle repudiated is, for me, the inescapable conclusion of a reading of such documents as those on the church, on Divine Revelation, on Religious Liberty, and on the church in the Modern World. I find unwelcome support for that conclusion in the *bizarreries* of the extreme Traditionalists of today, for whom the Council represents a Satanic capitulation to principles and forces which the church had opposed since they found their first articulation in the French Revolution.

So great was the conceptual and practical unity of "Roman Catholicism" that when any part of it was subtracted, the whole edifice came falling down. Clearly, nothing of equal strength and coherence has taken its place and perhaps never can. In some respects what has replaced it is not a pleasant sight; whether it is worse or better than "Roman Catholicism" must be decided by criteria that do not rest on the assumptions of "Roman Catholicism" or of a mindlessly effete "pluralism." Perhaps also we need to learn some patience (not to mention charity) and not expect that in twenty years—and let us not forget what a twenty years these have been also and especially outside the church—we have yet seen our way clear, either practically or conceptually.

The Council is almost bound to be misunderstood by anyone—whether "progressive" or "conservative"—who looks at it only from the standpoint of 1982 and of the transformations of the last twenty years. An adequate theological, historical, and sociological analysis is also needed. That such work is finally being undertaken is an encouraging sign, and I welcome Father Imbelli's fine essay as a useful contribution and invitation.

Let me propose as a model for the spirit with which to approach the present church the remarks made recently by Yves Congar, one of the men who most shaped the spirit and direction of the Council and whose very presence at the Council symbolized much of what it was about. "It is painful for me to see so many institutions and organizations which I knew when they were flourishing now disappearing or being weakened; but I am astonished—and moved [he added in broken voice]—to see so many ways in which the Spirit is causing the Gospel to spring up again in the lives of men and women, as if an underground pool of living water were ceaselessly rising to become a spring in the faith and generosity of the faithful."

JOSEPH A. KOMONCHAK
Associate Professor
Dept. of Religion & Religious Education
The Catholic University of America

Roots of celibacy

Sacramento, Calif.

To the Editors: Regarding the letter by Mr. Sheldon Vanauken in the issue of Oct. 8th, the tradition of clerical celibacy is not two-thousand years old. Nor is it biblical. His remarks show an amazing ignorance of Scripture and early church history. Celibacy is more of an offshoot of Greek philosophy than Judeo-Christian tradition. In any event, it has nothing to do with holiness, nor wisdom.

Has Mr. Vanauken considered that if the church tables the issues of clerical celibacy and ordination of women it could be disobeying the commands to carry the Gospel to the whole world? Jesus did not say that His Supper could only be led by males. He chose married men for Apostles. In the eyes of God, men and women are equally human in rights and responsibilities, no double standards.

It could be that the Holy Spirit thinks that this is exactly the right time to reconsider our traditions and get with it on the job of spreading the Good News.

PATRICIA M. LEIPER

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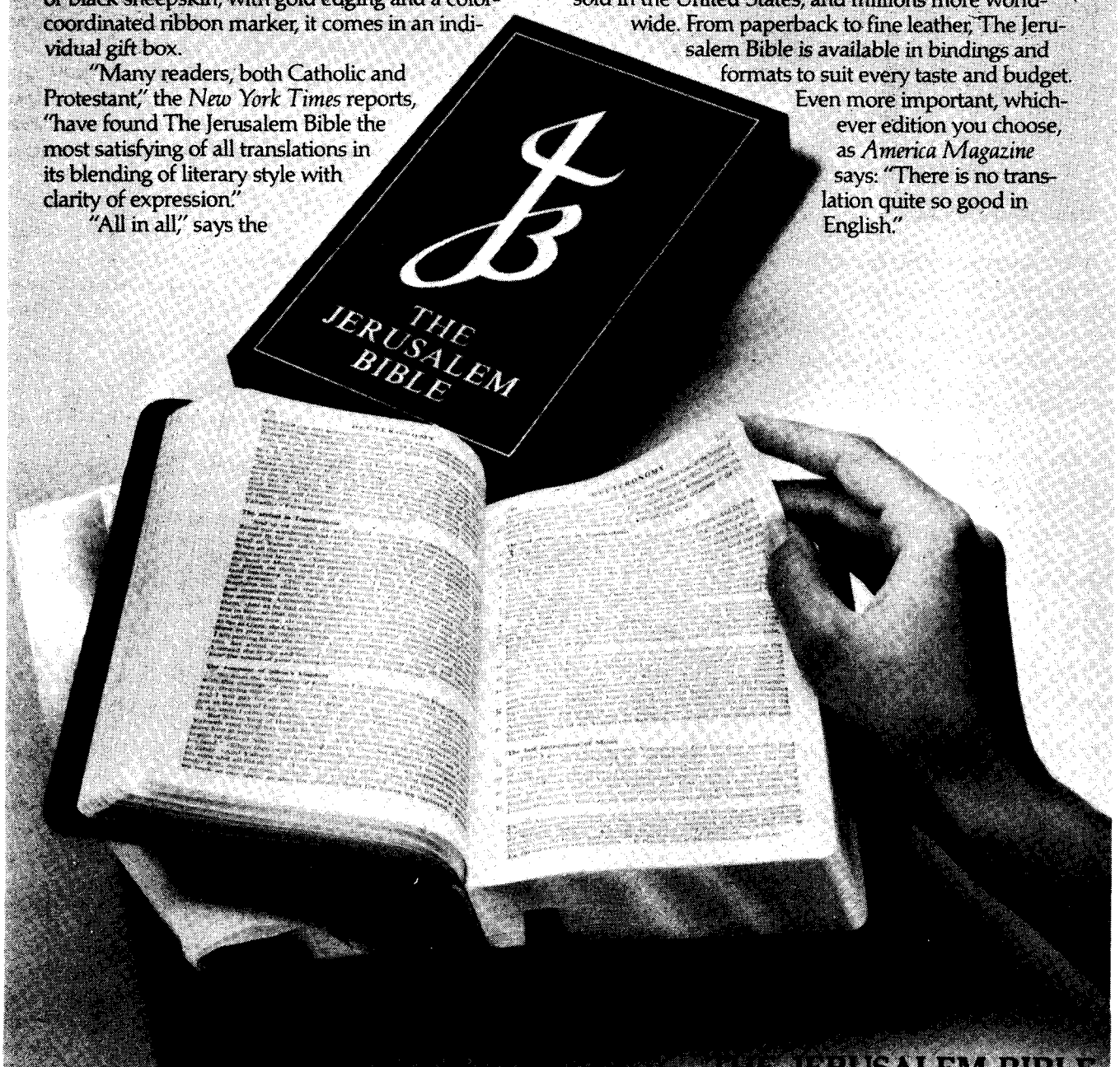

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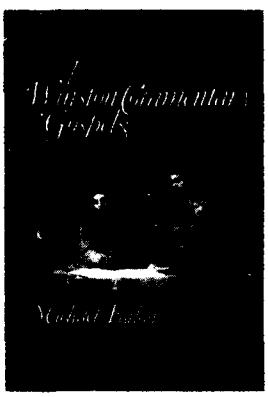

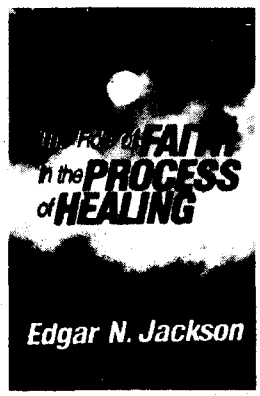

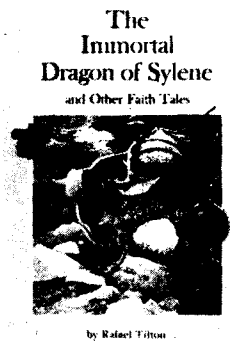

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